

Ethel G. Everingham

June, 1927

STORIES
FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS



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Stories for Junior High Schools

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PREFACE

THIS book contains seven short stories or tales of high literary rank, all written during the nineteenth century and representing the following authors: Charles Dickens, Washington Irving, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Frank R. Stockton, Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews, and Edward Everett Hale.

The short story and the tale are both akin to the novel. Like the novel, they depend upon plot, characters, and setting. Like every piece of literature a short story or a tale consists of a beginning, a central theme, and an ending. The tale differs from the short story in greater flexibility. It allows the author the joy of taking the long way round instead of making him keep to the direct road of straightforward narrative. The two selections from Dickens and the one from Hale are delightful examples of the tale.

These seven stories well deserve a place in any course of reading for Junior High Schools. And no better proof could be given than this book affords, that inspired subject matter makes literature great in a sense that standardized form and clever technique alone can never achieve. Every one of the masters of English prose whose work is exemplified in this volume moulded his materials as he saw fit and made his own rules.

For boys and girls of the Junior High School, enjoyment of the story is the reason for reading. The notes of this edition are, therefore, subordinated to

the text and yet are comprehensive enough to prevent loss of pleasure through the failure to understand the meaning. The suggestive questions and problems are prepared in the spirit of modern educational methods, and contain enough of the puzzle to challenge the attention of intelligent boys and girls.

William Rabenort

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CHARLES DICKENS

(February 7, 1812—June 9, 1870.)

As a boy, Charles Dickens was too sickly to play outdoor games; and in his spare time he became a great reader. Books of romance and adventure like *The Arabian Nights*, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, *Don Quixote*, and *Robinson Crusoe* he liked best. He told to his companions the stories he read, and others that he made up. He had a good voice and was accustomed to sing comic songs and to speak humorous pieces to the family and their guests.

When Charles was eleven years old, his father, a pay clerk in the British navy, was put into prison for debt. Charles was obliged to leave school and work in a shoe blacking factory, where he pasted labels on the boxes. After a time Mr. Dickens inherited some money, and, on the payment of his bills, was set free. Charles attended an academy until he was fourteen, then, through the influence of his father got a place as an office boy for a lawyer. That was the end of his school days, but he studied shorthand at night and spent a good deal of time in the reading room of the British Museum.

At nineteen Dickens was one of the best stenographers in London. He became a reporter on a London paper and travelled over England, chiefly by stage coach, to report political meetings. He wrote descriptions of English life which he signed with his

nom de plume, Boz. These sketches attracted so much attention that he was engaged to write articles to accompany a series of pictures. This was the turn in the fortunes of Charles Dickens. *The Pickwick Papers*, as these illustrated articles were called, came out every month like a magazine. Dickens made them into a continued story—a sort of novel. At once they were recognized as a masterpiece of humor and were widely read. At the age of twenty-five Dickens found himself a successful author. From that time he published a new novel almost every year for the rest of his life. His writings brought him wealth and fame and he became probably the most popular author in the English language.

During his long and happy life Dickens did an enormous amount of work. His collected writings fill thirty volumes. He wrote long letters to many correspondents. He attended innumerable public and private gatherings and was invited to many that he had no time to attend. He gave public readings from his own works, and his ability as a reader was so great that large audiences attended these entertainments.

In 1842 Dickens visited the United States. He was given a cordial welcome and his public readings were very successful. Unfortunately he was outspoken in his criticism of some of the crude ways of our young country and he gave offense to many Americans. He came again to the United States in 1864 and found public opinion more favorable to him. Indeed the receptions to him in some of the large cities were quite remarkable.

Dickens bought a house called Gad's Hill near London. As a boy he had greatly admired this place

and had always wished to possess it. There he kept open house and there busy with literary work, he died. He was buried in the Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey.

Dickens's *Christmas Carol* is one of the best short stories in English. Not that it has the most exciting plot nor the cleverest technique but because it has power to inspire the reader and to keep alive the incomparable charm of the author's personality it has been called "the greatest little book in the world."

A Christmas Carol was Dickens's favorite among his works. He wrote it in 1843, the first of several Christmas stories.

Thackeray, Dickens's friend and fellow novelist, wrote of it, "Who can listen to objections regarding such a book at this? It seems to me a national benefit, and to every man or woman who reads it a personal kindness." Dr. John H. Finley says that this one little book has helped more than any other, save the Bible itself, to make Christmas Day a universal holiday. And public opinion confirms the critics, for from Dickens's day to this, five generations of readers have laughed and cried over this simple tale. Its ever increasing popularity points it out as one of the world's enduring books.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL¹

STAVE² ONE

*Being a Ghost Story of Christmas
In Prose*

MARLEY'S GHOST

MARLEY was dead: to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk,³ the undertaker, and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it: and Scrooge's name was good upon 'Change,⁴ for anything he chose to put his hand to. Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

Mind! I don't mean to say that I know, of my own knowledge, what there is particularly dead about a door-nail.⁵ I might have been inclined, myself, to regard a coffin-nail as the deadest piece of ironmongery in the trade. But the wisdom⁶ of our ancestors is in the simile; and my unhallowed hands shall not disturb it, or the Country's done for. You will therefore permit me to repeat, emphatically, that Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

Scrooge knew he was dead? Of course he did. How could it be otherwise? Scrooge and he were partners for I don't know how many years. Scrooge was his sole executor,⁷ his sole administrator, his sole assign, his sole residuary legatee, his sole friend and sole mourner. And even Scrooge was not so dreadfully cut up by the sad event, but that he was an

excellent man of business on the very day of the funeral, and solemnized it with an undoubted bargain.

The mention of Marley's funeral brings me back to the point I started from. There is no doubt that Marley was dead. This must be distinctly understood, or nothing wonderful can come of the story I am going to relate. If we were not perfectly convinced that Hamlet's Father⁸ died before the play began, there would be nothing more remarkable in his taking a stroll at night, in an easterly wind, upon his own ramparts, than there would be in any other middle-aged gentleman rashly turning out after dark in a breezy spot—say Saint Paul's Churchyard⁹ for instance—literally to astonish his son's weak mind.

Scrooge never painted out Old Marley's name. There it stood, years afterwards, above the warehouse door: Scrooge and Marley. The firm was known as Scrooge and Marley. Sometimes people new to the business called Scrooge Scrooge, and sometimes Marley, but he answered to both names: it was all the same to him.

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. A frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, nor wintry weather chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose, no pelting rain less open to entreaty. Foul weather didn't know where to have him. The heaviest rain, and snow, and hail, and sleet, could boast of the advantage over him in only one respect. They often "came down" handsomely, and Scrooge never did.

Nobody ever stopped him in the street to say, with gladsome looks, "My dear Scrooge, how are you? When will you come to see me?" No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle, no children asked him what it was o'clock, no man or woman ever once in all his life inquired the way to such and such a place, of Scrooge. Even the blind men's dogs appeared to know him; and when they saw him coming on, would tug their owners into doorways and up courts; and then would wag their tails as though they said, "No eye at all is better than an evil eye, dark master!"

But what did Scrooge care? It was the very thing he liked. To edge his way along the crowded paths of life, warning all human sympathy to keep its distance, was what the knowing ones call "nuts" to Scrooge.

Once upon a time—of all the good days in the year, on Christmas Eve—old Scrooge sat busy in his counting-house. It was cold, bleak, biting weather: foggy withal: and he could hear the people in the court outside go wheezing up and down, beating their hands upon their breasts, and stamping their feet upon the pavement-stones to warm them. The City clocks had

only just gone three, but it was quite dark already: it had not been light all day: and candles were flaring in the windows of the neighboring offices, like ruddy smears upon the palpable brown air. The fog came pouring in at every chink and keyhole, and was so dense without, that although the court was of the narrowest, the houses opposite were mere phantoms. To see the dingy cloud come drooping down, obscuring everything, one might have thought that Nature lived hard by, and was brewing on a large scale.

The door of Scrooge's counting-house was open that he might keep his eye upon his clerk, who in a dismal little cell beyond, a sort of tank, was copying letters. Scrooge had a very small fire, but the clerk's fire was so very much smaller that it looked like one coal. But he couldn't replenish it, for Scrooge kept the coal-box in his own room; and so surely as the clerk came in with the shovel, the master predicted that it would be necessary for them to part. Wherefore the clerk put on his white comforter, and tried to warm himself at the candle; in which effort, not being a man of a strong imagination, he failed.

"A Merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!" cried a cheerful voice. It was the voice of Scrooge's nephew, who came upon him so quickly that this was the first intimation he had of his approach.

"Bah!" said Scrooge, "Humbug!"¹⁰

He had so heated himself with rapid walking in the fog and frost, this nephew of Scrooge's, that he was all in a glow; his face was ruddy and handsome; his eyes sparkled, and his breath smoked again.

"Christmas a humbug, uncle!" said Scrooge's nephew. "You don't mean that, I am sure."

"I do," said Scrooge. "Merry Christmas! What right have you to be merry? What reason have you to be merry? You're poor enough."

"Come, then," returned the nephew, gaily. "What right have you to be dismal? What reason have you to be morose? You're rich enough."

Scrooge having no better answer ready on the spur of the moment, said, "Bah!" again; and followed it up with "Humbug!"

"Don't be cross, uncle," said the nephew.

"What else can I be," returned the uncle, "when I live in such a world of fools as this? Merry Christmas! Out upon merry Christmas! What's Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, but not an hour richer; a time for balancing your books and having every item in 'em through a round dozen of months presented dead against you? If I could work my will," said Scrooge, indignantly, "every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas,' on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should!"

"Uncle!" pleaded the nephew.

"Nephew!" returned the uncle, sternly, "keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine."

"Keep it!" repeated Scrooge's nephew. "But you don't keep it."

"Let me leave it alone, then," said Scrooge. "Much good may it do you! Much good it has ever done you!"

"There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare

say," returned the nephew; "Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round—apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that—as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time; the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And therefore, uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it *has* done me good, and *will* do me good; and I say, God bless it!"

The clerk in the Tank involuntary applauded: becoming immediately sensible of the impropriety, he poked the fire, and extinguished the last frail spark forever.

"Let me hear another sound from *you*," said Scrooge, "and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your situation."

"You're quite a powerful speaker, Sir," he added, turning to his nephew. "I wonder you don't go into Parliament."

"Don't be angry, uncle. Come! Dine with us to-morrow."

Scrooge said that he would see him—yes, indeed he did. He went the whole length of the expression, and said that he would see him in that extremity first.

"But why?" cried Scrooge's nephew. "Why?"

"Why did you get married?" said Scrooge.

"Because I fell in love."

"Because you fell in love!" growled Scrooge, as if

that were the only one thing in the world more ridiculous than a merry Christmas. "Good afternoon!"

"Nay, uncle, but you never came to see me before that happened. Why give it as a reason for not coming now?"

"Good afternoon!" said Scrooge.

"I want nothing from you; I ask nothing of you; why cannot we be friends?"

"Good afternoon!" said Scrooge.

"I am sorry, with all my heart, to find you so resolute. We have never had any quarrel, to which I have been a party. But I have made the trial in homage to Christmas, and I'll keep my Christmas humor to the last. So A Merry Christmas, uncle!"

"Good afternoon!" said Scrooge.

"And A Happy New Year!"

"Good afternoon!" said Scrooge.

His nephew left the room without an angry word, notwithstanding. He stopped at the outer door to bestow the greetings of the season on the clerk, who, cold as he was, was warmer than Scrooge; for he returned them cordially.

"There's another fellow," muttered Scrooge who overheard him; "my clerk, with fifteen shillings¹¹ a week, and a wife and family, talking about a merry Christmas. I'll retire to Bedlam."¹²

This lunatic, in letting Scrooge's nephew out, had let two other people in. They were portly gentlemen, pleasant to behold, and now stood, with their hats off, in Scrooge's office. They had books and papers in their hands, and bowed to him.

"Scrooge and Marley's, I believe," said one of the gentlemen, referring to his list. "Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge, or Mr. Marley?"

"Mr. Marley has been dead these seven years," Scrooge replied. "He died seven years ago, this very night."

"We have no doubt his liberality is well represented by his surviving partner," said the gentleman, presenting his credentials.

It certainly was; for they had been two kindred spirits. At the ominous word "liberality," Scrooge frowned, and shook his head, and handed the credentials back.

"At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge," said the gentleman, taking up a pen, "it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the poor and destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessities; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, Sir."

"Are there no prisons?" asked Scrooge.

"Plenty of prisons," said the gentleman, laying down the pen again.

"And the Union workhouses?"¹³ demanded Scrooge. "Are they still in operation?"

"They are. Still," returned the gentleman, "I wish I could say they were not."

"The Treadmill¹⁴ and the Poor Law¹⁵ are in full vigor, then?" said Scrooge.

"Both very busy, Sir."

"Oh! I was afraid, from what you said at first, that something had occurred to stop them in their useful course," said Scrooge. "I'm very glad to hear it."

"Under the impression that they scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitude," returned the gentleman, "a few of us are endeavor-

ing to raise a fund to buy the Poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth. We choose this time, because it is a time, of all others, when Want is keenly felt, and Abundance rejoices. What shall I put you down for?"

"Nothing!" Scrooge replied.

"You wish to be anonymous?"

"I wish to be left alone," said Scrooge. "Since you ask me what I wish, gentlemen, that is my answer. I don't make merry myself at Christmas, and I can't afford to make idle people merry. I help to support the establishments I have mentioned: they cost enough: and those who are badly off must go there."

"Many can't go there; and many would rather die."

"If they would rather die," said Scrooge, "they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population. Besides—excuse me—I don't know that."

"But you might know it," observed the gentleman.

"It's not my business," Scrooge returned. "It's enough for a man to understand his own business, and not to interfere with other people's. Mine occupies me constantly. Good afternoon, gentlemen!"

Seeing clearly that it would be useless to pursue their point, the gentlemen withdrew. Scrooge resumed his labors with an improved opinion of himself, and in a more facetious temper than was usual with him.

Meanwhile the fog and darkness thickened so, that people ran about with flaring links,¹⁶ proffering their services to go before horses in carriages, and conduct them on their way. The ancient tower of a church, whose gruff old bell was always peeping slyly down at Scrooge out of a gothic¹⁷ window in the wall, became invisible, and struck the hours and quarters in

the clouds, with tremulous vibrations afterwards as if its teeth were chattering in its frozen head up there. The cold became intense. In the main street at the corner of the court, some laborers were repairing the gas-pipes, and had lighted a great fire in a brazier, round which a party of ragged men and boys were gathered; warming their hands and winking their eyes before the blaze in rapture. The water-plug being left in solitude, its overflowing sullenly congealed, and turned to misanthropic ice. The brightness of the shops where holly sprigs and berries crackled in the lamp heat of the windows, made pale faces ruddy as they passed. Poulterers' and grocers' trades became a splendid joke: a glorious pageant, with which it was next to impossible to believe that such dull principles as bargain and sale had anything to do. The Lord Mayor, in the stronghold of the mighty Mansion House,¹⁸ gave orders to his fifty cooks and butlers to keep Christmas as a Lord Mayor's household should; and even the little tailor, whom he had fined five shillings on the previous Monday for being drunk and bloodthirsty in the streets, stirred up to-morrow's pudding in his garret, while his lean wife and the baby sallied out to buy the beef.

Foggier yet, and colder! Piercing, searching, biting, cold. If the good Saint Dunstan¹⁹ had but nipped the Evil Spirit's nose with a touch of such weather as that, instead of using his familiar weapons, then indeed he would have roared to lusty purpose. The owner of one scant young nose, gnawed and mumbled by the hungry cold as bones are gnawed by dogs, stooped down at Scrooge's keyhole to regale him with a Christmas carol: but at the first sound of

"God bless you, merry gentleman!
May nothing you dismay!"²⁰

Scrooge seized the ruler with such energy of action, that the singer fled in terror, leaving the keyhole to the fog and even more congenial frost.

At length the hour of shutting up the counting-house arrived. With an ill-will Scrooge dismounted from his stool, and tacitly admitted the fact to the expectant clerk in the Tank, who instantly snuffed his candle out, and put on his hat.

"You'll want all day to-morrow, I suppose?" said Scrooge.

"If quite convenient, Sir."

"It's not convenient," said Scrooge, "and it's not fair. If I was to stop half-a-crown²¹ for it, you'd think yourself ill-used, I'll be bound?"

The clerk smiled faintly.

"And yet," said Scrooge, "you don't think *me* ill-used, when I pay a day's wages for no work."

The clerk observed that it was only once a year.

"A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December!" said Scrooge, buttoning his great-coat to the chin. "But I suppose you must have the whole day. Be here all the earlier next morning!"

The clerk promised that he would; and Scrooge walked out with a growl. The office was closed in a twinkling, and the clerk, with the long ends of his white comforter dangling below his waist (for he boasted no great-coat), went down a slide on Cornhill,²² at the end of a lane of boys, twenty times, in honor of its being Christmas Eve, and then ran

home to Camden Town²³ as hard as he could pelt, to play at blindman's-buff.

Scrooge took his melancholy dinner in his usual melancholy tavern; and having read all the newspapers, and beguiled the rest of the evening with his banker's-book, went home to bed. He lived in chambers which had once belonged to his deceased partner. They were a gloomy suite of rooms, in a lowering pile of building up a yard, where it had so little business to be, that one could scarcely help fancying it must have run there when it was a young house, playing at hide-and-seek with other houses, and have forgotten the way out again. It was old enough now, and dreary enough, for nobody lived in it but Scrooge, the other rooms being all let out as offices. The yard was so dark that even Scrooge, who knew its every stone, was fain to grope with his hands. The fog and frost so hung about the black old gateway of the house, that it seemed as if the Genius²⁴ of the Weather sat in mournful meditation on the threshold.

Now, it is a fact, that there was nothing at all particular about the knocker²⁵ on the door, except that it was very large. It is also a fact, that Scrooge had seen it, night and morning, during his whole residence in that place; also that Scrooge had as little of what is called fancy about him as any man in the City of London, even including—which is a bold word—the corporation,²⁶ aldermen, and livery. Let it also be borne in mind that Scrooge had not bestowed one thought on Marley, since his last mention of his seven-years' dead partner that afternoon. And then let any man explain to me, if he can, how it happened that Scrooge, having his key in the lock of the door, saw in the knocker, without its undergoing any inter-

mediate process of change: not a knocker, but Marley's face.

Marley's face. It was not in impenetrable shadow as the other objects in the yard were, but had a dismal light about it, like a bad lobster in a dark cellar. It was not angry or ferocious, but looked at Scrooge as Marley used to look: with ghostly spectacles turned up on its ghostly forehead. The hair was curiously stirred, as if by breath or hot air; and, though the eyes were wide open, they were perfectly motionless. That, and its livid color, made it horrible; but its horror seemed to be in spite of the face and beyond its control, rather than a part of its own expression.

As Scrooge looked fixedly at this phenomenon, it was a knocker again.

To say that he was not startled, or that his blood was not conscious of a terrible sensation to which it had been a stranger from infancy, would be untrue. But he put his hand upon the key he had relinquished, turned it sturdily, walked in, and lighted his candle.

He *did* pause, with a moment's irresolution, before he shut the door; and he *did* look cautiously behind it first, as if he half-expected to be terrified with the sight of Marley's pigtail²⁷ sticking out into the hall. But there was nothing on the back of the door, except the screws and nuts that held the knocker on; so he said "Pooh, pooh!" and closed it with a bang.

The sound resounded through the house like thunder. Every room above, and every cask in the wine-merchant's cellars below, appeared to have a separate peal of echoes of its own. Scrooge was not a man to be frightened by echoes. He fastened the door, and walked across the hall, and up the stairs: slowly too: trimming his candle as he went.

You may talk vaguely about driving a coach-and-six²⁸ up a good old flight of stairs, or through a bad young Act of Parliament; but I mean to say you might have got a hearse up that staircase, and taken it broadwise, with the splinter-bar²⁹ towards the wall, and the door towards the balustrades: and done it easy. There was plenty of width for that, and room to spare; which is perhaps the reason why Scrooge thought he saw a locomotive³⁰ hearse going on before him in the gloom. Half-a-dozen gas-lamps out of the street wouldn't have lighted the entry too well, so you may suppose that it was pretty dark with Scrooge's dip.³¹

Up Scrooge went, not caring a button for that: darkness is cheap, and Scrooge liked it. But before he shut his heavy door, he walked through his rooms to see that all was right. He had just enough recollection of the face to desire to do that.

Sitting-room, bedroom, lumber-room. All as they should be. Nobody under the table, nobody under the sofa; a small fire in the grate; spoon and basin ready; and the little saucepan of gruel (Scrooge had a cold in his head) upon the hob.³² Nobody under the bed; nobody in the closet; nobody in his dressing-gown, which was hanging up in a suspicious attitude against the wall. Lumber-room as usual. Old fire-guard, old shoes, two fish-baskets, washing-stand on three legs, and a poker.

Quite satisfied, he closed his door, and locked himself in; double-locked himself in, which was not his custom. Thus secured against surprise, he took off his cravat; put on his dressing-gown and slippers, and his nightcap; and sat down before the fire to take his gruel.

It was a very low fire indeed; nothing on such a bitter night. He was obliged to sit close to it, and brood over it, before he could extract the least sensation of warmth from such a handful of fuel. The fireplace was an old one, built by some Dutch merchant³³ long ago, and paved all round with quaint Dutch tiles, designed to illustrate the Scriptures. There were Cains and Abels,³⁴ Pharaohs' daughters,³⁵ Queens of Sheba,³⁶ Angelic messengers descending through the air on clouds like feather-beds, Abrahams, Belshazzars,³⁷ Apostles³⁸ putting off to sea in butter-boats, hundreds of figures, to attract his thoughts; and yet that face of Marley, seven years dead, came like the ancient Prophet's rod,³⁹ and swallowed up the whole. If each smooth tile had been a blank at first, with power to shape some picture on its surface from the disjointed fragments of his thoughts, there would have been a copy of old Marley's head on every one.

"Humbug!" said Scrooge; and walked across the room.

After several turns, he sat down again. As he threw his head back in the chair, his glance happened to rest upon a bell,⁴⁰ a disused bell, that hung in the room, and communicated for some purpose now forgotten with a chamber in the highest story of the building. It was with great astonishment, and with a strange, inexplicable dread, that as he looked, he saw this bell begin to swing. It swung so softly in the outset that it scarcely made a sound; but soon it rang out loudly, and so did every bell in the house.

This might have lasted half a minute, or a minute, but it seemed an hour. The bells ceased as they had begun, together. They were succeeded by a clanking noise, deep down below; as if some person were

dragging a heavy chain over the casks in the wine-merchant's cellar. Scrooge then remembered to have heard that ghosts in haunted houses were described as dragging chains:

The cellar-door flew open with a booming sound, and then he heard the noise much louder, on the floors below; then coming up the stairs; then coming straight towards his door.

"It's humbug still!" said Scrooge. "I won't believe it."

His color changed though, when, without a pause, it came on through the heavy door, and passed into the room before his eyes. Upon its coming in, the dying flame leaped up, as though it cried "I know him! Marley's Ghost!" and fell again.

The same face: the very same. Marley in his pig-tail, usual waistcoat, tights, and boots; the tassels on the latter bristling, like his pigtail, and his coat-skirts, and the hair upon his head. The chain he drew was clasped about his middle. It was long, and wound about him like a tail; and it was made (for Scrooge observed it closely) of cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers,⁴¹ deeds,⁴² and heavy purses wrought in steel. His body was transparent; so that Scrooge, observing him, and looking through his waistcoat, could see the two buttons on his coat behind.

Scrooge had often heard it said that Marley had no bowels,⁴³ but he had never believed it until now.

No, nor did he believe it even now. Though he looked the phantom through and through, and saw it standing before him; though he felt the chilling influence of its death-cold eyes; and marked the very texture of the folded kerchief⁴⁴ bound about its head

and chin, which wrapper he had not observed before: he was still incredulous, and fought against his senses.

"How now!" said Scrooge, caustic and cold as ever. "What do you want with me?"

"Much!"—Marley's voice, no doubt about it.

"Who are you?"

"Ask me who I *was*."

"Who *were* you then?" said Scrooge, raising his voice. "You're particular—for a shade." He was going to say "*to* a shade," but substituted this, as more appropriate.

"In life I was your partner, Jacob Marley."

"Can you—can you sit down?" asked Scrooge, looking doubtfully at him.

"I can."

"Do it then."

Scrooge asked the question, because he didn't know whether a ghost so transparent might find himself in a condition to take a chair; and felt that in the event of its being impossible, it might involve the necessity of an embarrassing explanation. But the Ghost sat down on the opposite side of the fireplace, as if he were quite used to it.

"You don't believe in me," observed the Ghost.

"I don't," said Scrooge.

"What evidence would you have of my reality beyond that of your senses?"

"I don't know," said Scrooge.

"Why do you doubt your senses?"

"Because," said Scrooge, "a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheats. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone

potato. There's more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are!"

Scrooge was not much in the habit of cracking jokes, nor did he feel, in his heart, by any means waggish then. The truth is, that he tried to be smart, as a means of distracting his own attention, and keeping down his terror; for the spectre's voice disturbed the very marrow in his bones.

To sit, staring at those fixed, glazed eyes, in silence for a moment, would play, Scrooge felt, the very deuce with him. There was something very awful, too, in the spectre's being provided with an infernal atmosphere of its own. Scrooge could not feel it himself, but this was clearly the case; for though the Ghost sat perfectly motionless, its hair, and skirts, and tassels, were still agitated as by the hot vapor⁴⁵ from an oven.

"You see this toothpick?" said Scrooge, returning quickly to the charge, for the reason just assigned; and wishing, though it were only for a second, to divert the vision's stony gaze from himself.

"I do," replied the Ghost.

"You are not looking at it," said Scrooge.

"But I see it," said the Ghost, "notwithstanding."

"Well!" returned Scrooge, "I have but to swallow this, and be for the rest of my days persecuted by a legion of goblins,⁴⁶ all of my own creation. Humbug, I tell you—humbug!"

At this the spirit raised a frightful cry, and shook its chain with such a dismal and appalling noise, that Scrooge held on tight to his chair to save himself from falling in a swoon. But how much greater was his horror, when the phantom taking off the bandage

round its head, as if it were too warm to wear indoors, its lower jaw dropped down upon its breast!

Scrooge fell upon his knees, and clasped his hands before his face.

"Mercy!" he said. "Dreadful apparition, why do you trouble me?"

"Man of the worldly mind!" replied the Ghost, "do you believe in me or not?"

"I do," said Scrooge. "I must. But why do spirits walk the earth, and why do they come to me?"

"It is required of every man," the Ghost returned, "that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow-men, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world—oh, woe is me!—and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness!"

Again the spectre raised a cry, and shook its chain, and wrung its shadowy hands.

"You are fettered," said Scrooge, trembling. "Tell me why?"

"I wear the chain I forged in life," replied the Ghost. "I made it link by link, and yard by yard; I girded it on of my own free will, and of my own free will I wore it. Is its pattern strange to *you*?"

Scrooge trembled more and more.

"Or would you know," pursued the Ghost, "the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself? It was full as heavy and as long as this, seven Christmas Eves ago. You have labored on it, since. It is a ponderous chain!"

Scrooge glanced about him on the floor, in the expectation of finding himself surrounded by some fifty

or sixty fathoms⁴⁷ of iron cable: but he could see nothing.

"Jacob," he said imploringly. "Old Jacob Marley, tell me more. Speak comfort to me, Jacob."

"I have none to give," the Ghost replied. "It comes from other regions, Ebenezer Scrooge, and is conveyed by other ministers,⁴⁸ to other kinds of men. Nor can I tell you what I would. A very little more, is all permitted to me. I cannot rest, I cannot stay, I cannot linger anywhere. My spirit never walked beyond our counting-house—mark me!—in life my spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money-changing hole; and weary journeys lie before me!"

It was a habit with Scrooge, whenever he became thoughtful, to put his hands in his breeches pockets. Pondering on what the Ghost had said, he did so now, but without lifting up his eyes, or getting off his knees.

"You must have been very slow about it, Jacob," Scrooge observed, in a business-like manner, though with humility and deference.

"Slow!" the Ghost repeated.

"Seven years dead," mused Scrooge. "And travelling all the time!"

"The whole time," said the Ghost. "No rest, no peace. Incessant torture of remorse."

"You travel fast?" said Scrooge.

"On the wings of the wind," replied the Ghost.

"You might have got over a great quantity of ground in seven years," said Scrooge.

The Ghost, on hearing this, set up another cry, and clanked its chain so hideously in the dead silence of

the night, that the Ward⁴⁹ would have been justified in indicting it for a nuisance.

“Oh! captive, bound, and double-ironed,” cried the phantom, “not to know, that ages of incessant labor, by immortal creatures, for this earth must pass into eternity before the good of which it is susceptible is all developed. Not to know that any Christian spirit working kindly in its little sphere, whatever it may be, will find its mortal life too short for its vast means of usefulness. Not to know that no space of regret can make amends for one life’s opportunity misused! Yet such was I! Oh! such was I!”

“But you were always a good man of business, Jacob,” faltered Scrooge, who now began to apply this to himself.

“Business!” cried the Ghost, wringing its hands again. “Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, were, all, my business. The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business!”

It held up its chain at arm’s length, as if that were the cause of all its unavailing grief, and flung it heavily upon the ground again.

“At this time of the rolling year,” the spectre said, “I suffer most. Why did I walk through crowds of fellow-beings with my eyes turned down, and never raise them to that blessed Star which led the Wise Men⁵⁰ to a poor abode? Were there no poor homes to which its light would have conducted *me*?”

Scrooge was very much dismayed to hear the spectre going on at this rate, and began to quake exceedingly.

"Hear me!" cried the Ghost. "My time is nearly gone."

"I will," said Scrooge. "But don't be hard upon me! Don't be flowery, Jacob! Pray!"

"How it is that I appear before you in a shape that you can see, I may not tell. I have sat invisible beside you many and many a day."

It was not an agreeable idea. Scrooge shivered, and wiped the perspiration from his brow.

"That is no light part of my penance," pursued the Ghost. "I am here to-night to warn you, that you have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate. A chance and hope of my procuring, Ebenezer."

"You were always a good friend to me," said Scrooge. "Thank'ee!"

"You will be haunted," resumed the Ghost, "by Three Spirits."

Scrooge's countenance fell almost as low as the Ghost's had done.

"Is that the chance and hope you mentioned, Jacob?" he demanded, in a faltering voice.

"It is."

"I—I think I'd rather not," said Scrooge.

"Without their visits," said the Ghost, "you cannot hope to shun the path I tread. Expect the first to-morrow, when the bell tolls one."

"Couldn't I take 'em all at once, and have it over, Jacob?" hinted Scrooge.

"Expect the second on the next night at the same hour. The third upon the next night when the last stroke of twelve has ceased to vibrate. Look to see me no more; and look that, for your own sake, you remember what has passed between us!"

When it had said these words, the spectre took its

wrapper from the table, and bound it round its head, as before. Scrooge knew this, by the smart sound its teeth made, when the jaws were brought together by the bandage. He ventured to raise his eyes again, and found his supernatural visitor confronting him in an erect attitude, with its chain wound over and about its arm.

The apparition walked backward from him; and at every step it took, the window raised itself a little, so that when the spectre reached it, it was wide open. It beckoned Scrooge to approach, which he did. When they were within two paces of each other, Marley's Ghost held up its hand, warning him to come no nearer. Scrooge stopped.

Not so much in obedience, as in surprise and fear; for on the raising of the hand, he became sensible of confused noises in the air; incoherent sounds of lamentation and regret; wailings inexpressibly sorrowful and self-accusatory. The spectre, after listening for a moment, joined in the mournful dirge; and floated out upon the bleak, dark night.

Scrooge followed to the window: desperate in his curiosity. He looked out.

The air was filled with phantoms, wandering hither and thither in restless haste, and moaning as they went. Every one of them wore chains like Marley's Ghost; some few (they might be guilty governments) were linked together; none were free. Many had been personally known to Scrooge in their lives. He had been quite familiar with one old ghost, in a white waistcoat, with a monstrous iron safe attached to its ankle, who cried piteously at being unable to assist a wretched woman with an infant, whom it saw below, upon a door-step. The misery with them all was,

clearly, that they sought to interfere, for good, in human matters, and had lost the power forever.

Whether these creatures faded into mist, or mist enshrouded them, he could not tell. But they and their spirit voices faded together; and the night became as it had been when he walked home.

Scrooge closed the window, and examined the door by which the Ghost had entered. It was double-locked, as he had locked it with his own hands, and the bolts were undisturbed. He tried to say "Humbug!" but stopped at the first syllable. And being, from the emotion he had undergone, or the fatigues of the day, or his glimpse of the Invisible World, or the dull conversation of the Ghost, or the lateness of the hour, much in need of repose, went straight to bed, without undressing, and fell asleep upon the instant.

STAVE TWO

THE FIRST OF THE THREE SPIRITS

WHEN Scrooge awoke, it was so dark, that looking out of bed, he could scarcely distinguish the transparent window from the opaque walls of his chamber. He was endeavoring to pierce the darkness with his ferret eyes, when the chimes of a neighboring church struck the four quarters. So he listened for the hour.

To his great astonishment the heavy bell went on from six to seven, and from seven to eight, and regularly up to twelve; then stopped. Twelve! It was past two when he went to bed. The clock was wrong. An icicle must have got into the works. Twelve!

He touched the spring of his repeater,⁵¹ to correct this most preposterous clock. Its rapid little pulse beat twelve; and stopped.

"Why, it isn't possible," said Scrooge, "that I can have slept through a whole day and far into another night. It isn't possible that anything has happened to the sun, and this is twelve at noon!"

The idea being an alarming one, he scrambled out of bed, and groped his way to the window. He was obliged to rub the frost off with the sleeve of his dressing-gown before he could see anything; and he could see very little then. All he could make out was, that it was still very foggy and extremely cold, and that there was no noise of people running to and fro, and making a great stir, as there unquestionably would

have been if night had beaten off bright day, and taken possession of the world. This was a great relief, because "three days after sight of this First of Exchange⁵² pay to Mr. Ebenezer Scrooge or his order," and so forth, would have become a mere United States' security⁵³ if there were no days to count by.

Scrooge went to bed again, and thought, and thought, and thought it over and over and over, and could make nothing of it. The more he thought, the more perplexed he was; and the more he endeavored not to think, the more he thought. Marley's Ghost bothered him exceedingly. Every time he resolved within himself, after mature inquiry, that it was all a dream, his mind flew back again, like a strong spring released, to its first position, and presented the same problem to be worked all through, "Was it a dream or not?"

Scrooge lay in this state until the chimes had gone three quarters more, when he remembered, on a sudden, that the Ghost had warned him of a visitation when the bell tolled one. He resolved to lie awake until the hour was passed; and, considering that he could no more go to sleep than go to Heaven, this was perhaps the wisest resolution in his power.

The quarter was so long, that he was more than once convinced he must have sunk into a doze unconsciously, and missed the clock. At length it broke upon his listening ear.

"Ding, dong!"

"A quarter past," said Scrooge, counting.

"Ding, dong!"

"Half-past!" said Scrooge.

"Ding, dong!"

"A quarter to it," said Scrooge.

“Ding, dong!”

“The hour itself,” said Scrooge, triumphantly, “and nothing else!”

He spoke before the hour bell sounded, which it now did with a deep, dull, hollow, melancholy ONE. Light flashed up in the room upon the instant, and the curtains of his bed were drawn.

The curtains of his bed were drawn aside, I tell you, by a hand. Not the curtains at his feet, nor the curtains at his back, but those to which his face was addressed. The curtains of his bed were drawn aside; and Scrooge, starting up into a half-recumbent attitude, found himself face to face with the unearthly visitor who drew them: as close to it as I am now to you, and I am standing in the spirit at your elbow.

It was a strange figure—like a child: yet not so like a child as like an old man, viewed through some supernatural medium, which gave him the appearance of having receded from the view, and being diminished to a child’s proportions. Its hair, which hung about its neck and down its back, was white as if with age; and yet the face had not a wrinkle in it, and the tenderest bloom was on the skin. The arms were very long and muscular; the hands the same, as if its hold were of uncommon strength. Its legs and feet, most delicately formed, were, like those upper members, bare. It wore a tunic of the purest white; and round its waist was bound a lustrous belt, the sheen of which was beautiful. It held a branch of fresh green holly in its hand; and, in singular contradiction of that wintry emblem, had its dress trimmed with summer flowers. But the strangest thing about it was, that from the crown of its head there sprang a bright clear jet of light, by which all this was visible;

and which was doubtless the occasion of its using, in its duller moments, a great extinguisher for a cap, which it now held under its arm.

Even this, though, when Scrooge looked at it with increasing steadiness, was *not* its strangest quality. For as its belt sparkled and glittered now in one part and now in another, and what was light one instant, at another time was dark, so the figure itself fluctuated in its distinctness: being now a thing with one arm, now with one leg, now with twenty legs, now a pair of legs without a head, now a head without a body: of which dissolving parts, no outline would be visible in the dense gloom wherein they melted away. And in the very wonder of this, it would be itself again; distinct and clear as ever.

"Are you the Spirit, Sir, whose coming was foretold to me?" asked Scrooge.

"I am!"

The voice was soft and gentle. Singularly low, as if instead of being so close beside him, it were at a distance.

"Who, and what are you?" Scrooge demanded.

"I am the Ghost of Christmas Past."

"Long past?" inquired Scrooge: observant of its dwarfish stature.

"No. Your past."

Perhaps, Scrooge could not have told anybody why, if anybody could have asked him; but he had a special desire to see the Spirit in his cap; and begged him to be covered.⁵⁴

"What!" exclaimed the Ghost, "would you so soon put out, with worldly hands, the light I give? Is it not enough that you are one of those whose passions

made this cap, and force me through whole trains of years to wear it low upon my brow?"

Scrooge reverently disclaimed all intention to offend, or any knowledge of having wilfully "bonneted" the Spirit at any period of his life. He then made bold to inquire what business brought him there.

"Your welfare!" said the Ghost.

Scrooge expressed himself much obliged, but could not help thinking that a night of unbroken rest would have been more conducive to that end. The Spirit must have heard him thinking, for it said immediately:—

"Your reclamation, then. Take heed!"

It put out its strong hand as it spoke, and clasped him gently by the arm.

"Rise! and walk with me!"

It would have been in vain for Scrooge to plead that the weather and the hour were not adapted to pedestrian purposes; that the bed was warm, and the thermometer a long way below freezing; that he was clad but lightly in his slippers, dressing-gown, and nightcap; and that he had a cold upon him at that time. The grasp, though gentle as a woman's hand, was not to be resisted. He rose: but finding that the Spirit made towards the window, clasped its robe in supplication.

"I am a mortal," Scrooge remonstrated, "and liable to fall."

"Bear but a touch of my hand *there*," said the Spirit, laying it upon his heart, "and you shall be upheld in more than this!"

As the words were spoken, they passed through the wall, and stood upon an open country road, with fields on either hand. The city had entirely vanished.

Not a vestige of it was to be seen. The darkness and the mist had vanished with it, for it was a clear, cold, winter day, with snow upon the ground.

"Good Heaven!" said Scrooge, clasping his hands together, as he looked about him. "I was bred in this place. I was a boy here!"

The Spirit gazed upon him mildly. Its gentle touch, though it had been light and instantaneous, appeared still present to the old man's sense of feeling. He was conscious of a thousand odors floating in the air, each one connected with a thousand thoughts, and hopes, and joys, and cares long, long forgotten!

"Your lip is trembling," said the Ghost. "And what is that upon your cheek?"

Scrooge muttered, with an unusual catching in his voice, that it was a pimple; and begged the Ghost to lead him where he would.

"You recollect the way?" inquired the Spirit.

"Remember it!" cried Scrooge with fervor—"I could walk it blindfold."

"Strange to have forgotten it for so many years!" observed the Ghost. "Let us go on."

They walked along the road; Scrooge recognizing every gate, and post, and tree; until a little market-town appeared in the distance, with its bridge, its church, and winding river. Some shaggy ponies now were seen trotting towards them with boys upon their backs, who called to other boys in country gigs and carts, driven by farmers. All these boys were in great spirits, and shouted to each other, until the broad fields were so full of merry music, that the crisp air laughed to hear it.

"These are but shadows of the things that have

been," said the Ghost. "They have no consciousness of us."

The jocund travellers came on; and as they came, Scrooge knew and named them every one. Why was he rejoiced beyond all bounds to see them! Why did his cold eye glisten, and his heart leap up as they went past! Why was he filled with gladness when he heard them give each other Merry Christmas, as they parted at cross-roads and by-ways, for their several homes! What was merry Christmas to Scrooge? Out upon merry Christmas! What good had it ever done to him?

"The school is not quite deserted," said the Ghost. "A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still."

Scrooge said he knew it. And he sobbed.

They left the high-road, by a well-remembered lane,⁵⁵ and soon approached a mansion of dull red brick, with a little weathercock-surmounted cupola,⁵⁶ on the roof, and a bell hanging in it. It was a large house, but one of broken fortunes; for the spacious offices were little used, their walls were damp and mossy, their windows broken, and their gates decayed. Fowls clucked and strutted in the stables; and the coach-houses and sheds were overrun with grass. Nor was it more retentive of its ancient state, within; for entering the dreary hall, and glancing through the open doors of many rooms, they found them poorly furnished, cold, and vast. There was an earthy savor in the air, a chilly bareness in the place, which associated itself somehow with too much getting up by candle-light, and not too much to eat.

They went, the Ghost and Scrooge, across the hall, to a door at the back of the house. It opened before

them, and disclosed a long, bare, melancholy room, made barer still by lines of plain deal forms and desks. At one of these a lonely boy was reading near a feeble fire; and Scrooge sat down upon a form, and wept to see his poor forgotten self as he had used to be.

Not a latent echo in the house, not a squeak and scuffle from the mice behind the panelling, not a drip from the half-thawed water-spout in the dull yard behind, not a sigh among the leafless boughs of one despondent poplar, not the idle swinging of an empty store-house door, no, not a clicking in the fire, but fell upon the heart of Scrooge with softening influence, and gave a freer passage to his tears.

The Spirit touched him on the arm, and pointed to his younger self, intent upon his reading. Suddenly a man, in foreign garments: wonderfully real and distinct to look at: stood outside the window, with an axe stuck in his belt, and leading an ass laden with wood by the bridle.

"Why, it's Ali Baba!"⁵⁷ Scrooge exclaimed in ecstasy. "It's dear old honest Ali Baba! Yes, Yes, I know! One Christmas time, when yonder solitary child was left here all alone, he *did* come, for the first time, just like that. Poor boy! And Valentine,"⁵⁸ said Scrooge, "and his wild brother, Orson; there they go! And what's his name,⁵⁹ who was put down in his drawers, asleep, at the Gate of Damascus,⁶⁰ don't you see him! And the Sultan's Groom turned upside down by the Genii;⁶¹ there he is upon his head! Serve him right! I'm glad of it. What business had *he* to be married to the Princess!"

To hear Scrooge expending all the earnestness of his nature on such subjects, in a most extraordinary

voice between laughing and crying; and to see his heightened and excited face; would have been a surprise to his business friends in the City, indeed.

"There's the Parrot!" cried Scrooge. "Green body and yellow tail, with a thing like a lettuce growing out of the top of his head; there he is! Poor Robin Crusoe,⁶² he called him, when he came home again after sailing round the island. 'Poor Robin Crusoe, where have you been, Robin Crusoe?' The man thought he was dreaming, but he wasn't. It was the Parrot, you know. There goes Friday, running for his life to the little creek! Halloo! Hoop! Halloo!"

Then, with a rapidity of transition very foreign to his usual character, he said, in pity for his former self, "Poor boy!" and cried again.

"I wish," Scrooge muttered, putting his hand in his pocket, and looking about him, after drying his eyes with his cuff: "but it's too late now."

"What is the matter?" asked the Spirit.

"Nothing," said Scrooge. "Nothing. There was a boy singing a Christmas Carol at my door last night. I should like to have given him something: that's all."

The Ghost smiled thoughtfully, and waved its hand, saying as it did so, "Let us see another Christmas!"

Scrooge's former self grew larger at the words, and the room became a little darker and more dirty. The panels shrank, the windows cracked; fragments of plaster fell out of the ceiling, and the naked laths were shown instead; but how all this was brought about, Scrooge knew no more than you do. He only knew that it was quite correct; that everything had happened so; that there he was, alone again, when all the other boys had gone home for the jolly holidays.

He was not reading now, but walking up and down

despairingly. Scrooge looked at the Ghost, and with a mournful shaking of his head, glanced anxiously towards the door.

It opened; and a little girl, much younger than the boy, came darting in, and putting her arms about his neck, and often kissing him, addressed him as her "Dear, dear brother."

"I have come to bring you home, dear brother!" said the child, clapping her tiny hands, and bending down to laugh. "To bring you home, home, home!"

"Home, little Fan?" returned the boy.

"Yes!" said the child, brimful of glee. "Home, for good and all. Home, forever and ever. Father is so much kinder than he used to be, that home's like Heaven! He spoke so gently to me one dear night when I was going to bed, that I was not afraid to ask him once more if you might come home; and he said Yes, you should; and sent me in a coach to bring you. And you're to be a man!" said the child, opening her eyes, "and are never to come back here; but first, we're to be together all the Christmas long, and have the merriest time in all the world."

"You are quite a woman, little Fan!" exclaimed the boy.

She clapped her hands and laughed, and tried to touch his head; but being too little, laughed again, and stood on tiptoe to embrace him. Then she began to drag him, in her childish eagerness, towards the door; and he, nothing loath to go, accompanied her.

A terrible voice in the hall cried, "Bring down Master Scrooge's box, there!" and in the hall appeared the schoolmaster himself, who glared on Master Scrooge with a ferocious condescension, and threw him into a dreadful state of mind by shaking hands

with him. He then conveyed him and his sister into the veriest old well of a shivering best-parlor that ever was seen, where the maps upon the wall, and the celestial and terrestrial globes in the windows, were waxy with cold. Here he produced a decanter of curiously light wine, and a block of curiously heavy cake, and administered instalments of those dainties to the young people: at the same time, sending out a meagre servant to offer a glass of "something" to the postboy, who answered that he thanked the gentleman, but if it was the same tap as he had tasted before, he had rather not. Master Scrooge's trunk being by this time tied on to the top of the chaise, the children bade the schoolmaster good-by right willingly; and getting into it, drove gayly down the garden-sweep,⁶³ the quick wheels dashing the hoarfrost and snow from off the dark leaves of the ever-greens like spray.

"Always a delicate creature, whom a breath might have withered," said the Ghost. "But she had a large heart!"

"So she had," cried Scrooge. "You're right. I'll not gainsay it, Spirit. God forbid!"

"She died a woman," said the Ghost, "and had, as I think, children."

"One child," Scrooge returned.

"True," said the Ghost. "Your nephew!"

Scrooge seemed uneasy in his mind; and answered briefly, "Yes."

Although they had but that moment left the school behind them, they were now in the busy thoroughfares of a city, where shadowy passengers passed and repassed; where shadowy carts and coaches battled for the way, and all the strife and tumult of a real

city were. It was made plain enough, by the dressing of the shops, that here too it was Christmas time again; but it was evening, and the streets were lighted up.

The Ghost stopped at a certain warehouse door, and asked Scrooge if he knew it.

"Know it!" said Scrooge. "Was I apprenticed here?"

They went in. At sight of an old gentleman in a Welsh wig,⁶⁴ sitting behind such a high desk, that if he had been two inches taller he must have knocked his head against the ceiling, Scrooge cried in great excitement:—

"Why, it's old Fezziwig! Bless his heart; it's Fezziwig alive again!"

Old Fezziwig laid down his pen, and looked up at the clock, which pointed to the hour of seven. He rubbed his hands; adjusted his capacious waistcoat; laughed all over himself, from his shoes to his organ of benevolence; and called out in a comfortable, oily, rich, fat, jovial voice:—

"Yo ho, there! Ebenezer! Dick!"

Scrooge's former self, now grown a young man, came briskly in, accompanied by his fellow-'prentice.

"Dick Wilkins, to be sure!" said Scrooge to the Ghost. "Bless me, yes. There he is. He was very much attached to me, was Dick. Poor Dick! Dear, dear!"

"Yo ho, my boys!" said Fezziwig. "No more work to-night. Christmas Eve, Dick. Christmas, Ebenezer! Let's have the shutters up," cried old Fezziwig, with a sharp clap of his hands, "before a man can say Jack Robinson!"

You wouldn't believe how those two fellows went

at it! They charged into the street with the shutters—one, two, three—had 'em up in their places—four, five, six—barred 'em and pinned 'em—seven, eight, nine—and came back before you could have got to twelve, panting like racehorses.

“Hilli-ho!” cried old Fezziwig, skipping down from the high desk, with wonderful agility. “Clear away, my lads, and let's have lots of room here! Hilli-ho, Dick! Chirrup, Ebenezer!”

Clear away! There was nothing they wouldn't have cleared away, or couldn't have cleared away, with old Fezziwig looking on. It was done in a minute. Every movable was packed off, as if it were dismissed from public life for evermore; the floor was swept and watered, the lamps were trimmed, fuel was heaped upon the fire; and the warehouse was as snug, and warm, and dry, and bright a ball-room, as you would desire to see upon a winter's night.

In came a fiddler with a music-book, and went up to the lofty desk, and made an orchestra of it, and tuned like fifty stomach-aches. In came Mrs. Fezziwig, one vast substantial smile. In came the three Miss Fezziwigs, beaming and lovable. In came the six young followers whose hearts they broke. In came all the young men and women employed in the business. In came the housemaid, with her cousin, the baker. In came the cook, with her brother's particular friend, the milkman. In came the boy from over the way, who was suspected of not having board enough from his master; trying to hide himself behind the girl from next door but one, who was proved to have had her ears pulled by her mistress. In they all came, one after another; some shyly, some boldly, some gracefully, some awkwardly, some push-

ing, some pulling; in they all came, anyhow and anyhow. Away they all went, twenty couple at once, hands half round and back again the other way; down the middle and up again; round and round in various stages of affectionate grouping; old top couple always turning up in the wrong place; new top couple starting off again, as soon as they got there; all top couples at last, and not a bottom one to help them. When this result was brought about, old Fezziwig, clapping his hands to stop the dance, cried out, "Well done!" and the fiddler plunged his hot face into a pot of porter,⁶⁵ especially provided for that purpose. But scorning rest upon his reappearance, he instantly began again, though there were no dancers yet, as if the other fiddler had been carried home, exhausted, on a shutter; and he were a brand-new man resolved to beat him out of sight, or perish.

There were more dances, and there were forfeits,⁶⁶ and more dances, and there was cake, and there was negus,⁶⁷ and there was a great piece of Cold Roast, and there was a great piece of Cold Boiled, and there were mince-pies, and plenty of beer. But the great effect of the evening came after the Roast and Boiled, when the fiddler (an artful dog, mind! The sort of man who knew his business better than you or I could have told it him!) struck up "Sir Roger de Coverley."⁶⁸ Then old Fezziwig stood out to dance with Mrs. Fezziwig. Top couple, too; with a good stiff piece of work cut out for them; three or four and twenty pair of partners; people who were not to be trifled with; people who *would* dance, and had no notion of walking.

But if they had been twice as many—ah, four times: old Fezziwig would have been a match for them, and

so would Mrs. Fezziwig. As to *her*, she was worthy to be his partner in every sense of the term. If that's not high praise, tell me higher, and I'll use it. A positive light appeared to issue from Fezziwig's calves. They shone in every part of the dance like moons. You couldn't have predicted, at any given time, what would become of 'em next. And when old Fezziwig and Mrs. Fezziwig had gone all through the dance; advance and retire, hold hands with your partner; bow and courtesy; corkscrew; thread-the-needle, and back again to your place; Fezziwig "cut"⁶⁹—cut so deftly, that he appeared to wink with his legs, and came upon his feet again without a stagger.

When the clock struck eleven, this domestic ball broke up. Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig took their stations, one on either side the door, and shaking hands with every person individually as he or she went out, wished him or her a Merry Christmas. When everybody had retired but the two 'prentices, they did the same to them; and thus the cheerful voices died away, and the lads were left to their beds; which were under a counter in the back-shop.

During the whole of this time, Scrooge had acted like a man out of his wits. His heart and soul were in the scene, and with his former self. He corroborated everything, remembered everything, enjoyed everything, and underwent the strangest agitation. It was not until now, when the bright faces of his former self and Dick were turned from them, that he remembered the Ghost, and became conscious that it was looking full upon him, while the light upon its head burnt very clear.

"A small matter," said the Ghost, "to make these silly folks so full of gratitude."

"Small!" echoed Scrooge.

The Spirit signed to him to listen to the two apprentices, who were pouring out their hearts in praise of Fezziwig; and when he had done so, said:—

"Why! Is it not? He has spent but a few pounds⁷⁰ of your mortal money: three or four, perhaps. Is that so much that he deserves this praise?"

"It isn't that," said Scrooge, heated by the remark, and speaking unconsciously like his former, not his latter self. "It isn't that, Spirit. He has the power to render us happy or unhappy; to make our service light or burdensome; a pleasure or a toil. Say that his power lies in words and looks; in things so slight and insignificant that it is impossible to add and count 'em up: what then? The happiness he gives, is quite as great as if it cost a fortune."

He felt the Spirit's glance, and stopped.

"What is the matter?" asked the Ghost.

"Nothing particular," said Scrooge.

"Something, I think?" the Ghost insisted.

"No," said Scrooge, "No. I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk just now! That's all."

His former self turned down the lamps as he gave utterance to the wish; and Scrooge and the Ghost again stood side by side in the open air.

"My time grows short," observed the Spirit. "Quick!"

This was not addressed to Scrooge, or to any one whom he could see, but it produced an immediate effect. For again Scrooge saw himself. He was older now; a man in the prime of life. His face had not the harsh and rigid lines of later years; but it had begun to wear the signs of care and avarice.

There was an eager, greedy, restless motion in the eye, which showed the passion that had taken root, and where the shadow of the growing tree would fall.

He was not alone, but sat by the side of a fair young girl in a mourning-dress; in whose eyes there were tears, which sparkled in the light that shone out of the Ghost of Christmas Past.

"It matters little," she said, softly. "To you, very little. Another idol⁷¹ has displaced me; and if it can cheer and comfort you in time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause to grieve."

"What idol has displaced you?" he rejoined.

"A golden one."

"This is the even-handed dealing of the world!" he said. "There is nothing on which it is so hard as poverty; and there is nothing it professes to condemn with such severity as the pursuit of wealth!"

"You fear the world too much," she answered, gently. "All your other hopes have merged into the hope of being beyond the chance of its sordid reproach. I have seen your nobler aspirations fall off one by one, until the master-passion, Gain, engrosses you. Have I not?"

"What then?" he retorted. "Even if I have grown so much wiser, what then? I am not changed towards you."

She shook her head.

"Am I?"

"Our contract is an old one. It was made when we were both poor and content to be so, until, in good season, we could improve our worldly fortune by our patient industry. You *are* changed. When it was made, you were another man."

"I was a boy," he said impatiently.

"Your own feeling tells you that you were not what you are," she returned. "I am. That which promised happiness when we were one in heart, is fraught with misery now that we are two. How often and how keenly I have thought of this, I will not say. It is enough that I *have* thought of it, and can release you."

"Have I ever sought release?"

"In words? No. Never."

"In what, then?"

"In a changed nature; in an altered spirit; in another atmosphere of life; another Hope as its great end. In everything that made my love of any worth or value in your sight. If this had never been between us, said the girl, looking mildly, but with steadiness, upon him, "tell me, would you seek me out and try to win me now? Ah, no!"

He seemed to yield to the justice of this supposition, in spite of himself. But he said with a struggle, "You think not."

"I would gladly think otherwise if I could," she answered, "Heaven knows! When *I* have learned a Truth like this, I know how strong and irresistible it must be. But if you were free to-day, to-morrow, yesterday, can even I believe that you would choose a dowerless girl—you who, in your very confidence with her, weigh everything by gain; or, choosing her, if for a moment you were false enough to your one guiding principle to do so, do I not know that your repentance and regret would surely follow? I do; and I release you. With a full heart, for the love of him you once were."

He was about to speak; but with her head turned from him, she resumed.

"You may—the memory of what is past half makes me hope you will—have pain in this. A very, very brief time, and you will dismiss the recollection of it, gladly, as an unprofitable dream, from which it happened well that you awoke. May you be happy in the life you have chosen!"

She left him, and they parted.

"Spirit!" said Scrooge, "show me no more! Conduct me home. Why do you delight to torture me?"

"One shadow more!" exclaimed the Ghost.

"No more!" cried Scrooge. "No more. I don't wish to see it. Show me no more!"

But the relentless Ghost pinioned him in both his arms, and forced him to observe what happened next.

They were in another scene and place; a room, not very large or handsome, but full of comfort. Near to the winter fire sat a beautiful young girl, so like the last that Scrooge believed it was the same, until he saw *her*, now a comely matron, sitting opposite her daughter. The noise in this room was perfectly tumultuous, for there were more children there, than Scrooge in his agitated state of mind could count; and, unlike the celebrated herd in the poem,⁷² they were not forty children conducting themselves like one, but every child was conducting itself like forty. The consequences were uproarious beyond belief; but no one seemed to care; on the contrary, the mother and daughter laughed heartily, and enjoyed it very much; and the latter, soon beginning to mingle in the sports, got pillaged by the young brigands most ruthlessly. What would I not have given to be one of them! Though I never could have been so rude, no, no! I wouldn't for the wealth of all the world have crushed that braided hair, and torn it down; and for

the precious little shoe, I wouldn't have plucked it off, God bless my soul! to save my life. As to measuring her waist in sport, as they did, bold young brood, I couldn't have done it; I should have expected my arm to have grown round it for a punishment, and never come straight again. And yet I should have dearly liked, I own, to have touched her lips; to have questioned her, that she might have opened them; to have looked upon the lashes of her downcast eyes, and never raised a blush; to have let loose waves of hair, an inch of which would be a keepsake beyond price: in short, I should have liked, I do confess, to have the lightest license of a child, and yet been man enough to know its value.

But now a knocking at the door was heard, and such a rush immediately ensued that she with laughing face and plundered dress was borne towards it the centre of a flushed and boisterous group just in time to greet the father, who came home attended by a man laden with Christmas toys and presents. Then the shouting and the struggling, and the onslaught that was made on the defenseless porter! The scaling him with chairs for ladders to dive into his pockets, despoil him of brown-paper parcels, hold on tight by his cravat, hug him round the neck, pommel his back, and kick his legs in irrepressible affection! The shouts of wonder and delight with which the development of every package was received! The terrible announcement that the baby had been taken in the act of putting a doll's frying-pan into his mouth, and was more than suspected of having swallowed a fictitious turkey, glued on a wooden platter! The immense relief of finding this a false alarm! The joy, and gratitude, and ecstasy! They are all indescribable

alike. It is enough that by degrees the children and their emotions got out of the parlor and by one stair at a time, up to the top of the house; where they went to bed, and so subsided.

And now Scrooge looked on more attentively than ever, when the master of the house, having his daughter leaning fondly on him, sat down with her and her mother at his own fireside; and when he thought that such another creature, quite as graceful and as full of promise, might have called him father, and been a spring-time in the haggard winter of his life, his sight grew very dim indeed.

"Belle," said the husband, turning to his wife with a smile, "I saw an old friend of yours this afternoon."

"Who was it?"

"Guess!"

"How can I? Tut, don't I know?" she added in the same breath, laughing as he laughed. "Mr. Scrooge."

"Mr. Scrooge it was. I passed his office window; and it was not shut up, and he had a candle inside, I could scarcely help seeing him. His partner lies upon the point of death, I hear; and there he sat alone.⁷³ Quite alone in the world, I do believe."

"Spirit!" said Scrooge in a broken voice, "remove me from this place."

"I told you these were shadows of the things that have been," said the Ghost. "That they are what they are, do not blame me!"

"Remove me!" Scrooge exclaimed, "I cannot bear it!"

He turned upon the Ghost, and seeing that it looked upon him with a face, in which in some strange way

there were fragments of all the faces it had shown him, wrestled with it.

“Leave me! Take me back! Haunt me no longer!”

In the struggle, if that can be called a struggle in which the Ghost with no visible resistance on its own part was undisturbed by any effort of its adversary, Scrooge observed that its light was burning high and bright; and dimly connecting that with its influence over him, he seized the extinguisher-cap, and by a sudden action pressed it down upon its head.

The Spirit dropped beneath it, so that the extinguisher covered its whole form; but though Scrooge pressed it down with all his force, he could not hide the light which streamed from under it, in an unbroken flood upon the ground.

He was conscious of being exhausted, and overcome by an irresistible drowsiness; and, further, of being in his own bedroom. He gave the cap a parting squeeze, in which his hand relaxed; and had barely time to reel to bed, before he sank into a heavy sleep.

STAVE THREE

THE SECOND OF THE THREE SPIRITS

AWAKING in the middle of a prodigiously tough snore, and sitting up in bed to get his thoughts together, Scrooge had no occasion to be told that the bell was again upon the stroke of One. He felt that he was restored to consciousness in the right nick of time, for the especial purpose of holding a conference with the second messenger despatched to him through Jacob Marley's intervention. But, finding that he turned uncomfortably cold when he began to wonder which of his curtains this new spectre would draw back, he put them every one aside with his own hands, and lying down again, established a sharp lookout all round the bed. For he wished to challenge the Spirit on the moment of its appearance, and did not wish to be taken by surprise and made nervous.

Gentlemen of the free-and-easy sort, who plume themselves on being acquainted with a move or two, and being usually equal to the time-of-day, express the wide range of their capacity for adventure by observing that they are good for anything from pitch-and-toss to manslaughter; between which opposite extremes, no doubt, there lies a tolerably wide and comprehensive range of subjects. Without venturing for Scrooge quite as hardily as this, I don't mind calling on you to believe that he was ready for a good broad field of strange appearances, and that nothing between

a baby and rhinoceros would have astonished him very much.

Now, being prepared for almost anything, he was not by any means prepared for nothing; and, consequently, when the bell struck One, and no shape appeared, he was taken with a violent fit of trembling. Five minutes, ten minutes, a quarter of an hour went by, yet nothing came. All this time, he lay upon his bed, the very core and centre of a blaze of ruddy light, which streamed upon it when the clock proclaimed the hour; and which, being only light, was more alarming than a dozen ghosts, as he was powerless to make out what it meant, or would be at; and was sometimes apprehensive that he might be at that very moment an interesting case of spontaneous combustion,⁷⁴ without having the consolation of knowing it. At last, however, he began to think—as you or I would have thought at first; for it is always the person not in the predicament who knows what ought to have been done in it, and would unquestionably have done it too—at last, I say, he began to think that the source and secret of this ghostly light might be in the adjoining room, from whence, on further tracing it, it seemed to shine. This idea taking full possession of his mind, he got up softly and shuffled in his slippers to the door.

The moment Scrooge's hand was on the lock, a strange voice called him by his name, and bade him enter. He obeyed.

It was his own room. There was no doubt about that. But it had undergone a surprising transformation. The walls and ceiling were so hung with living green, that it looked a perfect grove, from every part of which, bright gleaming berries glistened. The

crisp leaves of holly, mistletoe, and ivy reflected back the light, as if so many little mirrors had been scattered there; and such a mighty blaze went roaring up the chimney, as that dull petrification⁷⁵ of a hearth had never known in Scrooge's time, or Marley's, or for many and many a winter season gone. Heaped up on the floor, to form a kind of throne, were turkeys, geese, game,⁷⁶ poultry, brawn,⁷⁷ great joints of meat, sucking-pigs, long wreaths of sausages, mince-pies, plum-puddings, barrels of oysters, red-hot chestnuts, cherry-cheeked apples, juicy oranges, luscious pears, immense twelfth-cakes,⁷⁸ and seething bowls of punch, that made the chamber dim with their delicious steam. In easy state upon this couch, there sat a jolly Giant, glorious to see; who bore a glowing torch, in shape not unlike Plenty's horn,⁷⁹ and held it up, high up, to shed its light on Scrooge, as he came peeping round the door.

"Come in!" exclaimed the Ghost. "Come in! and know me better, man!"

Scrooge entered timidly, and hung his head before this Spirit. He was not the dogged Scrooge he had been; and though the Spirit's eyes were clear and kind, he did not like to meet them.

"I am the Ghost of Christmas Present,"⁸⁰ said the Spirit. "Look upon me!"

Scrooge reverently did so. It was clothed in one simple deep green robe, or mantle, bordered with white fur. This garment hung so loosely on the figure, that its capacious breast was bare, as if disdaining to be warded or concealed by any artifice. Its feet, observable beneath the ample folds of the garment, were also bare; and on its head it wore no other covering than a holly wreath set here and there with shin-

ing icicles. Its dark brown curls were long and free; free as its genial face, its sparkling eye, its open hand, its cheery voice, its unconstrained demeanor, and its joyful air. Girded round its middle was an antique scabbard; but no sword was in it, and the ancient sheath was eaten up with rust.

"You have never seen the like of me before!" exclaimed the Spirit.

"Never," Scrooge made answer to it.

"Have never walked forth with the younger members of my family; meaning (for I am very young) my elder brothers⁸¹ born in these later years?" pursued the Phantom.

"I don't think I have," said Scrooge. "I am afraid I have not. Have you had many brothers, Spirit?"

"More than eighteen hundred," said the Ghost.

"A tremendous family to provide for!" muttered Scrooge.

The Ghost of Christmas Present rose.

"Spirit," said Scrooge, submissively, "conduct me where you will. I went forth last night on compulsion, and I learnt a lesson which is working now. To-night, if you have aught to teach me, let me profit by it."

"Touch my robe!"

Scrooge did as he was told, and held it fast.

Holly, mistletoe, red berries, ivy, turkeys, geese, game, poultry, brawn, meat, pigs, sausages, oysters, pies, puddings, fruit, and punch, all vanished instantly. So did the room, the fire, the ruddy glow, the hour of night; and they stood in the city streets on Christmas morning, where (for the weather was severe) the people made a rough, but brisk and not unpleasant kind of music, in scraping the snow from the pave-

ment in front of their dwellings, and from the tops of their houses: whence it was mad delight to the boys to see it come plumping down into the road below, and splitting into artificial little snow-storms.

The house fronts looked black enough, and the windows blacker, contrasting with the smooth white sheet of snow upon the roofs, and with the dirtier snow upon the ground; which last deposit had been ploughed up in deep furrows by the heavy wheels of carts and wagons; furrows that crossed and recrossed each other hundreds of times where the great streets branched off, and made intricate channels, hard to trace, in the thick yellow mud and icy water. The sky was gloomy, and the shortest streets were choked up with a dingy mist, half thawed, half frozen, whose heavier particles descended in a shower of sooty atoms, as if all the chimneys in Great Britain had, by one consent, caught fire, and were blazing away to their dear hearts' content. There was nothing very cheerful in the climate or the town, and yet was there an air of cheerfulness abroad that the clearest summer air and brightest summer sun might have endeavored to diffuse in vain.

For, the people who were shovelling away on the housetops were jovial and full of glee; calling out to one another from the parapets, and now and then exchanging a facetious snow-ball—better-natured missile far than many a wordy jest—laughing heartily if it went right and not less heartily if it went wrong. The poulterers' shops were still half open, and the fruiterers' were radiant in their glory. There were great, round, pot-bellied baskets of chestnuts, shaped like the waistcoats of jolly old gentlemen, lolling at the doors, and tumbling out into the street in their

apoplectic opulence. There were ruddy, brown-faced, broad-girthed Spanish onions, shining in the fatness of their growth like Spanish friars; and winking from their shelves in wanton slyness at the girls as they went by, and glanced demurely at the hung-up mistletoe. There were pears and apples, clustered high in blooming pyramids; there were bunches of grapes, made, in the shopkeepers' benevolence, to dangle from conspicuous hooks, that people's mouths might water gratis as they passed; there were piles of filberts, mossy and brown, recalling, in their fragrance, ancient walks among the woods, and pleasant shufflings ankle deep through withered leaves; there were Norfolk biffins,⁸² squab, and swarthy, setting off the yellow of the oranges and lemons, and, in the great compactness of their juicy persons, urgently entreating and beseeching to be carried home in paper bags and eaten after dinner. The very gold and silver fish, set forth among these choice fruits in a bowl, though members of a dull and stagnant-blooded race, appeared to know that there was something going on; and, to a fish, went gasping round and round their little world in slow and passionless excitement.

The grocers'! oh the grocers'! nearly closed, with perhaps two shutters down, or one; but through those gaps such glimpses! It was not alone that the scales descending on the counter made a merry sound, or that the twine and roller parted company so briskly, or that the canisters were rattled up and down like juggling tricks, or even that the blended scents of tea and coffee were so grateful to the nose, or even that the raisins were so plentiful and rare, the almonds so extremely white, the sticks of cinnamon so long and straight, the other spices so delicious, the candied

fruits so caked and spotted with molten sugar as to make the coldest lookers-on feel faint and subsequently bilious. Nor was it that the figs were moist and pulpy, or that the French plums blushed in modest tartness from their highly-decorated boxes, or that everything was good to eat and in its Christmas dress; but the customers were all so hurried and so eager in the hopeful promise of the day, that they tumbled up against each other at the door, clashing their wicker baskets wildly, and left their purchases upon the counter, and came running back to fetch them, and committed hundreds of the like mistakes in the best humor possible; while the grocer and his people were so frank and fresh that the polished hearts with which they fastened their aprons behind might have been their own, worn outside for general inspection, and for Christmas daws⁸³ to peck at if they chose.

But soon the steeples called good people all, to church and chapel, and away they came, flocking through the streets in their best clothes, and with their gayest faces. And at the same time there emerged from scores of by-streets, lanes, and nameless turnings, innumerable people, carrying their dinners to the bakers' shops.⁸⁴ The sight of these poor revellers appeared to interest the Spirit very much, for he stood with Scrooge beside him in a baker's doorway, and taking off the covers as their bearers passed, sprinkled incense on their dinners from his torch. And it was a very uncommon kind of torch, for once or twice when there were angry words between some dinner-carriers who had jostled with each other, he shed a few drops of water on them from it, and their good humor was restored directly. For they said, it was

a shame to quarrel upon Christmas Day. And so it was! God love it, so it was!

In time the bells ceased, and the bakers were shut up; and yet there was a genial shadowing forth of all these dinners and the progress of their cooking, in the thawed blotch of wet above each baker's oven; where the pavement smoked as if its stones were cooking too.

"Is there a peculiar flavor in what you sprinkle from your torch?" asked Scrooge.

"There is. My own."

"Would it apply to any kind of dinner on this day?" asked Scrooge.

"To any kindly given. To a poor one most."

"Why to a poor one most?" asked Scrooge.

"Because it needs it most."

"Spirit," said Scrooge, after a moment's thought, "I wonder you, of all the beings in the many worlds about us, should desire to cramp these people's opportunities of innocent enjoyment."

"I!" cried the Spirit.

"You would deprive them⁸⁵ of their means of dining every seventh day, often the only day on which they can be said to dine at all," said Scrooge. "Wouldn't you?"

"I!" cried the Spirit.

"You seek to close these places on the Seventh Day?" said Scrooge. "And it comes to the same thing."

"I seek!" exclaimed the Spirit.

"Forgive me if I am wrong. It has been done in your name, or at least in that of your family," said Scrooge.

"There are some upon this earth of yours," returned

the Spirit, "who lay claim to know us, and who do their deeds of passion, pride, ill-will, hatred, envy, bigotry, and selfishness in our name, who are as strange to us and all our kith and kin, as if they had never lived. Remember that, and charge their doings on themselves, not us."

Scrooge promised that he would; and they went on, invisible, as they had been before, into the suburbs of the town. It was a remarkable quality of the Ghost (which Scrooge had observed at the baker's), that notwithstanding his gigantic size, he could accommodate himself to any place with ease; and that he stood beneath a low roof quite as gracefully and like a supernatural creature, as it was possible he could have done in any lofty hall.

And perhaps it was the pleasure the good Spirit had in showing off this power of his, or else it was his own kind, generous, hearty nature, and his sympathy with all poor men, that led him straight to Scrooge's clerk's; for there he went, and took Scrooge with him, holding to his robe; and on the threshold of the door the Spirit smiled, and stopped to bless Bob Cratchit's dwelling with the sprinklings of his torch. Think of that! Bob had but fifteen "Bob"⁸⁶ a week himself; he pocketed on Saturdays but fifteen copies of his Christian name; and yet the Ghost of Christmas Present blessed his four-roomed house!

Then up rose Mrs. Cratchit, Cratchit's wife, dressed out but poorly in a twice-turned gown, but brave in ribbons, which are cheap and make a goodly show for sixpence;⁸⁷ and she laid the cloth, assisted by Belinda Cratchit, second of her daughters, also brave in ribbons; while Master Peter Cratchit plunged a fork into the saucepan of potatoes, and getting the

corners of his monstrous shirt collar (Bob's private property, conferred upon his son and heir in honor of the day) into his mouth, rejoiced to find himself so gallantly attired, and yearned to show his linen in the fashionable Parks. And now two smaller Cratchits, boy and girl, came tearing in, screaming that outside the baker's they had smelt the goose, and known it for their own; and basking in luxurious thoughts of sage-and-onion, these young Cratchits danced about the table, and exalted Master Peter Cratchit to the skies, while he (not proud, although his collars nearly choked him) blew the fire,⁸⁸ until the slow potatoes bubbling up, knocked loudly at the saucepan-lid to be let out and peeled.

"What has ever got your precious father then?" said Mrs. Cratchit. "And your brother, Tiny Tim? And Martha warn't as late last Christmas Day by half-an-hour!"

"Here's Martha, mother!" said a girl, appearing as she spoke.

"Here's Martha, mother!" cried the two young Cratchits. "Hurrah! There's *such* a goose, Martha!"

"Why, bless your heart alive, my dear, how late you are!" said Mrs. Cratchit, kissing her a dozen times, and taking off her shawl and bonnet for her with officious zeal.

"We'd a deal of work to finish up last night," replied the girl, "and had to clear away this morning, mother!"

"Well! Never mind so long as you are come," said Mrs. Cratchit. "Sit ye down before the fire, my dear, and have a warm, Lord bless ye!"

"No, no! There's father coming," cried the two

young Cratchits, who were everywhere at once. "Hide, Martha, hide!"

So Martha hid herself, and in came little Bob, the father, with at least three feet of comforter exclusive of the fringe, hanging down before him; and his threadbare clothes darned up and brushed, to look seasonable; and Tiny Tim upon his shoulder. Alas for Tiny Tim, he bore a little crutch, and had his limbs supported by an iron frame!

"Why, where's our Martha?" cried Bob Cratchit, looking round.

"Not coming," said Mrs. Cratchit.

"Not coming!" said Bob, with a sudden declension in his high spirits; for he had been Tim's blood horse all the way from church, and had come home rampant. "Not coming upon Christmas Day!"

Martha didn't like to see him disappointed, if it were only in joke; so she came out prematurely from behind the closet door, and ran into his arms, while the two young Cratchits hustled Tiny Tim, and bore him off into the wash-house, that he might hear the pudding singing in the copper.

"And how did little Tim behave?" asked Mrs. Cratchit, when she had rallied Bob on his credulity, and Bob had hugged his daughter to his heart's content.

"As good as gold," said Bob, "and better. Somehow he gets thoughtful, sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk and blind men see."

Bob's voice was tremulous when he told them this, and trembled more when he said that Tiny Tim was growing strong and hearty.

His active little crutch was heard upon the floor, and back came Tiny Tim before another word was spoken, escorted by his brother and sister to his stool before the fire; and while Bob, turning up his cuffs—as if, poor fellow, they were capable of being made more shabby—compounded some hot mixture in a jug with gin and lemons, and stirred it round and round and put it on the hob to simmer; Master Peter, and the two ubiquitous⁸⁹ young Cratchits went to fetch the goose, with which they soon returned in high procession.

Such a bustle ensued that you might have thought a goose the rarest of all birds; a feathered phenomenon, to which a black swan was a matter of course—and in truth it was something very like it in that house. Mrs. Cratchit made the gravy (ready beforehand in a little saucepan) hissing hot; Master Peter mashed the potatoes with incredible vigor; Miss Belinda sweetened up the apple-sauce; Martha dusted the hot plates; Bob took Tiny Tim beside him in a tiny corner at the table; the two young Cratchits set chairs for everybody, not forgetting themselves, and mounting guard upon their posts, crammed spoons into their mouths, lest they should shriek for goose before their turn came to be helped. At last the dishes were set on, and grace⁹⁰ was said. It was succeeded by a breathless pause, as Mrs. Cratchit, looking slowly all along the carving-knife, prepared to plunge it in the breast; but when she did, and when the long expected gush of stuffing issued forth, one murmur of delight arose all around the board,

and even Tiny Tim, excited by the two young Cratchits, beat on the table with the handle of his knife, and feebly cried Hurrah!

There never was such a goose. Bob said he didn't believe there ever was such a goose cooked. Its tenderness and flavor, size and cheapness, were the themes of universal admiration. Eked out by the apple-sauce and mashed potatoes, it was a sufficient dinner for the whole family; indeed, as Mrs. Cratchit said with great delight (surveying one small atom of a bone upon the dish), they hadn't ate it all at last! Yet every one had had enough, and the youngest Cratchits in particular, were steeped in sage and onion to the eyebrows! But now, the plates being changed by Miss Belinda, Mrs. Cratchit left the room alone—too nervous to bear witnesses—to take the pudding up and bring it in.

Suppose it should not be done enough! Suppose it should break in turning out! Suppose somebody should have got over the wall of the back-yard, and stolen it, while they were merry with the goose—a supposition at which the two young Cratchits became livid! All sorts of horrors were supposed.

Hallo! A great deal of steam! The pudding was out of the copper. A smell like a washing-day! That was the cloth. A smell like an eating-house and a pastrycook's next door to each other, with a laundress's next door to that! That was the pudding! In half a minute Mrs. Cratchit entered—flushed, but smiling proudly—with the pudding, like a speckled cannon-ball, so hard and firm, blazing in half of half-a-quartern⁹¹ of ignited brandy, and bedight with Christmas holly stuck into the top.

Oh, a wonderful pudding! Bob Cratchit said, and

calmly too, that he regarded it as the greatest success achieved by Mrs. Cratchit since their marriage. Mrs. Cratchit said that now the weight was off her mind, she would confess she had had her doubts about the quantity of flour. Everybody had something to say about it, but nobody said or thought it was at all a small pudding for a large family. It would have been flat heresy to do so. Any Cratchit would have blushed to hint at such a thing.

At last the dinner was all done, the cloth was cleared, the hearth swept, and the fire made up. The compound in the jug being tasted, and considered perfect, apples and oranges were put upon the table, and a shovel-full of chestnuts on the fire. Then all the Cratchit family drew around the hearth, in what Bob Cratchit called a circle, meaning half a one; and at Bob Cratchit's elbow stood the family display of glass—two tumblers, and a custard-cup without a handle.

These held the hot stuff from the jug, however, as well as golden goblets would have done; and Bob served it out with beaming looks, while the chestnuts on the fire sputtered and cracked noisily. Then Bob proposed:—

“A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us!”

Which all the family re-echoed.

“God bless us every one!” said Tiny Tim, the last of all.

He sat very close to his father's side upon his little stool. Bob held his withered little hand in his, as if he loved the child, and wished to keep him by his side, and dreaded that he might be taken from him.

"Spirit," said Scrooge, with an interest he had never felt before, "tell me if Tiny Tim will live."

"I see a vacant seat," replied the Ghost, "in the poor chimney-corner, and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved. If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die."

"No, no," said Scrooge. "Oh, no, kind Spirit! say he will be spared."

"If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, none other of my race," returned the Ghost, "will find him here. What then? If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population."

Scrooge hung his head to hear his own words quoted by the Spirit, and was overcome with penitence and grief.

"Man," said the Ghost, "if man you be in heart, not adamant, forbear that wicked cant until you have discovered What the surplus is, and Where it is. Will you decide what men shall live, what men shall die? It may be, that in the sight of Heaven, you are more worthless and less fit to live than millions like this poor man's child. Oh, God! to hear the insect on the leaf pronouncing on the too much life among his hungry brothers in the dust!"

Scrooge bent before the Ghost's rebuke, and trembling cast his eyes upon the ground. But he raised them speedily, on hearing his own name.

"Mr. Scrooge!" said Bob; "I'll give you Mr. Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast!"

"The Founder of the Feast indeed!" cried Mrs. Cratchit, reddening. "I wish I had him here. I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and I hope he'd have a good appetite for it."

"My dear," said Bob, "the children! Christmas Day."

"It should be Christmas Day, I am sure," said she, "on which one drinks the health of such an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge. You know he is, Robert! Nobody knows it better than you do, poor fellow!"

"My dear," was Bob's mild answer, "Christmas Day."

"I'll drink his health for your sake and the Day's," said Mrs. Cratchit, "not for his. Long life to him! A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! He'll be very merry and happy, I have no doubt!"

The children drank the toast after her. It was the first of their proceedings which had no heartiness in it. Tiny Tim drank it last of all, but he didn't care twopence for it. Scrooge was the Ogre⁹² of the family. The mention of his name cast a dark shadow on the party, which was not dispelled for full five minutes.

After it had passed away, they were ten times merrier than before, from the mere relief of Scrooge the Baleful being done with. Bob Cratchit told them how he had a situation in his eye for Master Peter, which would bring in, if obtained, full five-and-sixpence weekly. The two young Cratchits laughed tremendously at the idea of Peter's being a man of business; and Peter himself looked thoughtfully at the fire from between his collars, as if he were deliberating what particular investments he should favor when he came into the receipt of that bewildering income. Martha, who was a poor apprentice at a milliner's, then told them what kind of work she had to do, and how many hours she worked at a stretch

and how she meant to lie abed to-morrow morning for a good long rest; to-morrow being a holiday she passed at home. Also how she had seen a countess and a lord some days before, and how the lord "was much about as tall as Peter;" at which Peter pulled up his collars so high that you couldn't have seen his head if you had been there. All this time the chest-nuts and the jug went round and round; and by-and-by they had a song about a lost child travelling in the snow, from Tiny Tim, who had a plaintive little voice, and sang it very well indeed.

There was nothing of high mark in this. They were not a handsome family; they were not well dressed; their shoes were far from being water-proof; their clothes were scanty; and Peter might have known, and very likely did, the inside of a pawnbroker's. But, they were happy, grateful, pleased with one another, and contented with the time; and when they faded, and looked happier yet in the bright sprinklings of the Spirit's torch at parting, Scrooge had his eye upon them, and especially on Tiny Tim, until the last.

By this time it was getting dark, and snowing pretty heavily; and as Scrooge and the Spirit went along the streets, the brightness of the roaring fires in kitchens, parlors, and all sorts of rooms, was wonderful. Here, the flickering of the blaze showed preparations for a cozy dinner, with hot plates baking through and through before the fire, and deep red curtains, ready to be drawn to shut out cold and darkness. There, all the children of the house were running out into the snow to meet their married sisters, brothers, cousins, uncles, aunts, and be the first to greet them. Here, again, were shadows on the window-blinds of guests assembling; and there a group of

handsome girls, all hooded and fur-booted, and all chattering at once, tripped lightly off to some near neighbor's house; where woe upon the single man who saw them enter—artful witches! well they knew it—in a glow!

But if you had judged from the numbers of people on their way to friendly gatherings, you might have thought that no one was at home to give them welcome when they got there, instead of every house expecting company, and piling up its fires half-chimney high. Blessings on it, how the Ghost exulted! How it bared its breadth of breast, and opened its capacious palm, and floated on outpouring, with a generous hand, its bright and harmless mirth, on everything within its reach! The very lamplighter, who ran on before dotting the dusky street with specks of light, and who was dressed to spend the evening somewhere, laughed out loudly as the Spirit passed: though little kenne^d⁹³ the lamplighter that he had any company but Christmas!

And now, without a word of warning from the Ghost, they stood upon a bleak and desert moor, where monstrous masses of rude stone were cast about, as though it were the burial-place of giants; and water spread itself wheresoever it listed, or would have done so, but for the frost that held it prisoner; and nothing grew but moss and furze,⁹⁴ and coarse, rank grass. Down in the west the setting sun had left a streak of fiery red, which glared upon the desolation for an instant, like a sullen eye, and frowning lower, lower, lower yet, was lost in the thick gloom of darkest night.

“What place is this?” asked Scrooge.

“A place where miners live who labor in the

bowels of the earth," returned the Spirit. "But they know me. See!"

A light shone from the window of a hut, and swiftly they advanced towards it. Passing through the wall of mud and stone, they found a cheerful company assembled round a glowing fire. An old, old man and woman, with their children and their children's children, and another generation beyond that, all decked out gayly in their holiday attire. The old man in a voice that seldom rose above the howling of the wind upon the barren waste, was singing them a Christmas song; it had been a very old song when he was a boy; and from time to time they all joined in the chorus. So surely as they raised their voices, the old man got quite blithe and loud; and so surely as they stopped, his vigor sank again.

The Spirit did not tarry here, but bade Scrooge hold his robe, and passing on above the moor, sped whither? Not to sea? To sea. To Scrooge's horror, looking back, he saw the last of the land, a frightful range of rocks, behind them; and his ears were deafened by the thundering of water, as it rolled, and roared, and raged among the dreadful caverns it had worn, and fiercely tried to undermine the earth.

Built upon a dismal reef of sunken rocks, some league⁹⁵ or so from shore, on which the waters chafed and dashed, the wild year through, there stood a solitary lighthouse. Great heaps of seaweed clung to its base, and storm-birds—born of the wind one might suppose as seaweed of the water—rose and fell about it, like the waves they skimmed.

But even here, two men who watched the light had made a fire, that through the loophole in the thick stone wall shed out a ray of brightness on the awful

sea. Joining their horny hands over the rough table at which they sat, they wished each other Merry Christmas in their can of grog; and one of them: the elder, too, with his face all damaged and scarred with hard weather, as the figure-head of an old ship might be: struck up a sturdy song that was like a gale in itself.

Again the Ghost sped on, above the black and heaving sea—on, on—until, being far away, as he told Scrooge, from any shore, they lighted on a ship. They stood beside the helmsman at the wheel, the look-out in the bow, the officers who had the watch; dark, ghostly figures in their several stations; but every man among them hummed a Christmas tune, or had a Christmas thought, or spoke below his breath to his companion of some by-gone Christmas Day, with homeward hopes belonging to it. And every man on board, waking or sleeping, good or bad, had had a kinder word for another on that day than on any day in the year; and had shared to some extent in its festivities; and had remembered those he cared for at a distance, and had known that they delighted to remember him.

It was a great surprise to Scrooge, while listening to the moaning of the wind, and thinking what a solemn thing it was to move on through the lonely darkness over an unknown abyss, whose depths were secrets as profound as death: it was a great surprise to Scrooge, while thus engaged, to hear a hearty laugh. It was a much greater surprise to Scrooge to recognize it as his own nephew's and to find himself in a bright, dry, gleaming room, with the Spirit standing smiling by his side, and looking at that same nephew with approving affability.

“Ha, ha!” laughed Scrooge’s nephew. “Ha, ha, ha!”

If you should happen, by any unlikely chance, to know a man more blest in a laugh than Scrooge’s nephew, all I can say is, I should like to know him too. Introduce him to me, and I’ll cultivate his acquaintance.

It is a fair, even-handed, noble adjustment of things, that while there is infection in disease and sorrow, there is nothing in the world so irresistibly contagious as laughter and good-humor. When Scrooge’s nephew laughed in this way: holding his sides, rolling his head, and twisting his face into the most extravagant contortions: Scrooge’s niece, by marriage, laughed as heartily as he. And their assembled friends being not a bit behindhand, roared out lustily.

“Ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha!”

“He said that Christmas was a humbug, as I live!” cried Scrooge’s nephew. “He believed it too!”

“More shame for him, Fred!” said Scrooge’s niece, indignantly. Bless those women; they never do anything by halves. They are always in earnest.

She was very pretty: exceedingly pretty. With a dimpled, surprised-looking, capital face; a ripe little mouth, that seemed made to be kissed—as no doubt it was; all kinds of good little dots about her chin, that melted into one another when she laughed; and the sunniest pair of eyes you ever saw in any little creature’s head. Altogether she was what you would have called provoking, you know; but satisfactory, too. Oh, perfectly satisfactory!

“He’s a comical old fellow,” said Scrooge’s nephew, “that’s the truth; and not so pleasant as he might be.

However, his offences carry their own punishment, and I have nothing to say against him."

"I'm sure he is very rich, Fred," hinted Scrooge's niece. "At least you always tell *me* so."

"What of that, my dear!" said Scrooge's nephew. "His wealth is of no use to him. He don't do any good with it. He don't make himself comfortable with it. He hasn't the satisfaction of thinking—ha, ha, ha!—that he is ever going to benefit us with it."

"I have no patience with him," observed Scrooge's niece. Scrooge's niece's sisters, and all the other ladies, expressed the same opinion.

"Oh, I have!" said Scrooge's nephew. "I am sorry for him; I couldn't be angry with him if I tried. Who suffers by his ill whims? Himself, always. Here, he takes it into his head to dislike us, and he won't come and dine with us. What's the consequence? He don't lose much of a dinner."

"Indeed, I think he loses a very good dinner," interrupted Scrooge's niece. Everybody else said the same, and they must be allowed to have been competent judges, because they had just had dinner; and, with the dessert⁹⁷ upon the table, were clustered round the fire; by lamp light.

"Well! I'm very glad to hear it," said Scrooge's nephew, "because I haven't any great faith in these young housekeepers. What do *you* say, Topper?"

Topper had clearly got his eye upon one of Scrooge's niece's sisters, for he answered that a bachelor was a wretched outcast, who had no right to express an opinion on the subject. Whereat Scrooge's niece's sister—the plump one with the lace tucker: not the one with the roses—blushed.

"Do go on, Fred," said Scrooge's niece, clapping

her hands. "He never finishes what he begins to say! He is such a ridiculous fellow!"

Scrooge's nephew revelled in another laugh, and as it was impossible to keep the infection off; though the plump sister tried hard to do it with aromatic vinegar; his example was unanimously followed.

"I was only going to say," said Scrooge's nephew, "that the consequence of his taking a dislike to us, and not making merry with us, is, as I think, that he loses some pleasant moments, which could do him no harm. I am sure he loses pleasanter companions than he can find in his own thoughts, either in his mouldy old office, or his dusty chambers. I mean to give him the same chance every year, whether he likes it or not, for I pity him. He may rail at Christmas till he dies, but he can't help thinking better of it—I defy him—if he finds me going there, in good temper, year after year, and saying 'Uncle Scrooge, how are you?' If it only puts him in the vein to leave his poor clerk fifty pounds, *that's* something; and I think I shook him yesterday."

It was their turn to laugh now at the notion of his shaking Scrooge. But being thoroughly good-natured, and not much caring what they laughed at, so that they laughed at any rate, he encouraged them in their merriment, and passed the bottle joyously.

After tea, they had some music. For they were a musical family, and knew what they were about, when they sang a Glee⁹⁷ or Catch,⁹⁸ I can assure you: especially Topper, who could growl away in the bass like a good one, and never swell the large veins in his forehead, or get red in the face over it. Scrooge's niece played well upon the harp; and played among other tunes a simple little air (a mere nothing: you

might learn to whistle it in two minutes), which had been familiar to the child who fetched Scrooge from the boarding-school, as he had been reminded by the Ghost of Christmas Past. When this strain of music sounded, all the things that Ghost had shown him, came upon his mind; he softened more and more; and thought that if he could have listened to it often, years ago, he might have cultivated the kindnesses of life for his own happiness with his own hands, without resorting to the sexton's⁹⁹ spade that buried Jacob Marley.

But they didn't devote the whole evening to music. After a while they played at forfeits; for it is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child himself. Stop! There was first a game at blind-man's buff. Of course there was. And I no more believe Topper was really blind than I believe he had eyes in his boots. My opinion is, that it was a done thing between him and Scrooge's nephew: and that the Ghost of Christmas Present knew it. The way he went after that plump sister in the lace tucker, was an outrage on the credulity of human nature. Knocking down the fire-irons, tumbling over the chairs, bumping up against the piano, smothering himself among the curtains, wherever she went, there went he. He always knew where the plump sister was. He wouldn't catch anybody else. If you had fallen up against him, as some of them did, and stood there; he would have made a feint of endeavoring to seize you, which would have been an affront to your understanding; and would instantly have sidled off in the direction of the plump sister. She often cried out that it wasn't fair; and it really was not. But when

at last, he caught her; when, in spite of all her silken rustlings, and her rapid flutterings past him, he got her into a corner whence there was no escape; then his conduct was the most execrable. For his pretending not to know her; his pretending that it was necessary to touch her head-dress, and further to assure himself of her identity by pressing a certain ring upon her finger, and a certain chain about her neck; was vile, monstrous! No doubt she told him her opinion of it, when another blind man being in office, they were so very confidential together, behind the curtains.

Scrooge's niece was not one of the blind-man's buff party, but was made comfortable with a large chair and a footstool, in a snug corner, where the Ghost and Scrooge were close behind her. But she joined in the forfeits, and loved her love to admiration with all the letters of the alphabet. Likewise at the game of How, When, and Where, she was very great, and to the secret joy of Scrooge's nephew, beat her sisters hollow: though they were sharp girls too, as Topper could have told you. There might have been twenty people there, young and old, but they all played, and so did Scrooge; for, wholly forgetting in the interest he had in what was going on, that his voice made no sound in their ears, he sometimes came out with his guess quite loud, and very often guessed quite right, too; for the sharpest needle, best Whitechapel, warranted not to cut in the eye was not sharper than Scrooge; blunt as he took it in his head to be.

The Ghost was greatly pleased to find him in this mood and looked upon him with such favor that he begged like a boy to be allowed to stay until the

guests departed. But this the Spirit said could not be done.

"Here is a new game," said Scrooge. "One half-hour, Spirit, only one!"

It is a game called Yes and No, where Scrooge's nephew had to think of something, and the rest must find out what; he only answering to their questions yes or no, as the case was. The brisk fire of questioning to which he was exposed, elicited from him that he was thinking of an animal, a live animal, rather a disagreeable animal, a savage animal, an animal that growled and grunted sometimes and talked sometimes, and lived in London, and walked about the streets, and wasn't made a show of, and wasn't led by anybody, and didn't live in a menagerie, and was never killed in a market, and was not a horse, or an ass, or a cow, or a bull, or a tiger, or a dog, or a pig, or a cat, or a bear. At every fresh question that was put to him, this nephew burst into a fresh roar of laughter; and was so inexpressibly tickled, that he was obliged to get up off the sofa and stamp. At last the plump sister, falling into a similar state, cried out:—

"I have found it out! I know what it is, Fred! I know what it is!"

"What is it?" cried Fred.

"It's your Uncle Scro-o-o-o-o-oge!"

Which it certainly was. Admiration was the universal sentiment, though some objected that the reply to "Is it a bear?" ought to have been "Yes;" inasmuch as an answer in the negative was sufficient to have diverted their thoughts from Mr. Scrooge, supposing they had ever had any tendency that way.

"He has given us plenty of merriment, I am sure,"

said Fred, "and it would be ungrateful not to drink his health. Here is a glass of mulled wine ready to our hand at the moment; and I say, 'Uncle Scrooge!'"

"Well! Uncle Scrooge!" they cried.

"A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to the old man, whatever he is!" said Scrooge's nephew. "He wouldn't take it from me, but may he have it, nevertheless. Uncle Scrooge!"

Uncle Scrooge had imperceptibly become so gay and light of heart, that he would have pledged the unconscious company in return, and thanked them in an inaudible speech, if the Ghost had given him time. But the whole scene passed off in the breath of the last word spoken by his nephew; and he and the Spirit were again upon their travels.

Much they saw, and far they went, and many homes they visited, but always with a happy end. The Spirit stood beside sick beds, and they were cheerful; on foreign lands, and they were close at home; by struggling men, and they were patient in their greater hope; by poverty, and it was rich. In almshouse, hospital, and jail, in misery's every refuge, where vain man in his little brief authority had not made fast the door, and barred the Spirit out, he left his blessing, and taught Scrooge his precepts.

It was a long night, if it were only a night; but Scrooge had his doubts of this, because the Christmas Holidays appeared to be condensed into the space of time they passed together. It was, strange, too, that while Scrooge remained unaltered in his outward form, the Ghost grew older, clearly older. Scrooge had observed this change, but never spoke of it, until they left a children's Twelfth Night party, when,

looking at the Spirit as they stood together in an open place, he noticed that its hair was gray.

"Are spirits' lives so short?" asked Scrooge.

"My life upon this globe, is very brief," replied the Ghost. "It ends to-night."

"To-night!" cried Scrooge.

"To-night at midnight. Hark! The time is drawing near."

The chimes were ringing the three quarters past eleven at that moment.

"Forgive me if I am not justified in what I ask," said Scrooge, looking intently at the Spirit's robe, "but I see something strange, and not belonging to yourself, protruding from your skirts. Is it a foot or a claw?"

"It might be a claw, for the flesh there is upon it," was the Spirit's sorrowful reply. "Look here."

From the foldings of its robe, it brought two children; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. They knelt down at its feet, and clung upon the outside of its garment.

"Oh, Man! look here. Look, look, down here!" exclaimed the Ghost.

They were a boy and girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish; but prostrate, too, in their humility. Where graceful youth should have filled their features out, and touched them with its freshest tints, a stale and shrivelled hand, like that of age, had pinched, and twisted them and pulled them into shreds. Where angels might have sat enthroned, devils lurked, and glared out menacing. No change, no degradation, no perversion of humanity, in any grade, through all the mysteries of wonderful creation, has monsters half so horrible and dread.

Scrooge started back, appalled. Having them

shown to him in this way, he tried to say they were fine children, but the words choked themselves, rather than be parties to a lie of such enormous magnitude.

"Spirit! are they yours?" Scrooge could say no more.

"They are Man's," said the Spirit, looking down upon them. "And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased. Deny it!" cried the Spirit, stretching out its hand toward the city. "Slander those who tell it ye! Admit it for your factious purposes, and make it worse! And bide the end!"

"Have they no refuge or resource?" cried Scrooge.

"Are there no prisons?" said the Spirit, turning on him for the last time with his own words. "Are there no workhouses?"

The bell struck twelve.

Scrooge looked about him for the Ghost, and saw it not. As the last stroke ceased to vibrate, he remembered the prediction of old Jacob Marley, and lifting up his eyes, beheld a solemn Phantom, draped and hooded, coming, like a mist along the ground, towards him.

STAVE FOUR

THE LAST OF THE SPIRITS

THE Phantom slowly, gravely, silently approached. When it came near him, Scrooge bent down upon his knee; for in the very air through which this Spirit moved it seemed to scatter gloom and mystery.

It was shrouded in a deep black garment, which concealed its head, its face, its form, and left nothing of it visible save one outstretched hand. But for this it would have been difficult to detach its figure from the night, and separate it from the darkness by which it was surrounded.

He felt that it was tall and stately when it came beside him, and that its mysterious presence filled him with a solemn dread. He knew no more, for the Spirit neither spoke nor moved.

"I am in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come?" said Scrooge.

The Spirit answered not, but pointed downward with its hand.

"You are about to show me shadows of the things that have not happened, but will happen in the time before us," Scrooge pursued. "Is that so, Spirit?"

The upper portion of the garment was contracted for an instant in its folds, as if the Spirit had inclined its head. That was the only answer he received.

Although well used to ghostly company by this time, Scrooge feared the silent shape so much that

his legs trembled beneath him, and he found that he could hardly stand when he prepared to follow it. The Spirit paused a moment, as observing his condition, and giving him time to recover.

But Scrooge was all the worse for this. It thrilled him with a vague uncertain horror, to know that behind the dusky shroud there were ghostly eyes intently fixed upon him, while he, though he stretched his own to the utmost could see nothing but a spectral hand and one great heap of black.

"Ghost of the Future!" he exclaimed, "I fear you more than any Spectre I have seen. But, as I know your purpose is to do me good, and as I hope to live to be another man from what I was, I am prepared to bear you company, and do it with a thankful heart. Will you not speak to me?"

It gave him no reply. The hand was pointed straight before them.

"Lead on!" said Scrooge. "Lead on! The night is waning fast, and it is precious time to me, I know. Lead on, Spirit!"

The Phantom moved away as it had come towards him. Scrooge followed in the shadow of its dress, which bore him up, he thought, and carried him along.

They scarcely seemed to enter the City;¹⁰⁰ for the City rather seemed to spring up about them, and encompass them of its own act. But there they were, in the heart of it; on 'Change, amongst the merchants; who hurried up and down, and chinked the money in their pockets, and conversed in groups, and looked at their watches, and trifled thoughtfully with their great gold seals;¹⁰¹ and so forth, as Scrooge had seen them often.

The Spirit stopped beside one little knot of business

men. Observing that the hand was pointed to them, Scrooge advanced to listen to their talk.

"No," said a great fat man with a monstrous chin, "I don't know much about it, either way. I only know he's dead."

"When did he die?" inquired another.

"Last night, I believe."

"Why, what was the matter with him?" asked a third, taking a vast quantity of snuff out of a very large snuff-box. "I thought he'd never die."

"God knows," said the first, with a yawn.

"What has he done with his money?" asked a red-faced gentleman with a pendulous excrescence on the end of his nose, that shook like the gills of a turkey-cock.

"I haven't heard," said the man with the large chin, yawning again. "Left it to his Company, perhaps. He hasn't left it to *me*. That's all I know."

This pleasantry was received with a general laugh.

"It's likely to be a very cheap funeral," said the same speaker; "for upon my life I don't know of anybody to go to it. Suppose we make up a party and volunteer?"

"I don't mind going if a lunch is provided," observed the gentleman with the excrescence on his nose. "But I must be fed, if I make one."

Another laugh.

"Well, I am the most disinterested among you, after all," said the first speaker, "for I never wear black gloves,¹⁰² and I never eat lunch. But I'll offer to go, if anybody else will. When I come to think of it, I'm not at all sure that I wasn't his most particular friend; for we used to stop and speak whenever we met. Bye, bye!"

Speakers and listeners strolled away, and mixed with other groups. Scrooge knew the men, and looked toward the Spirit for an explanation.

The Phantom glided on into a street. Its finger pointed to two persons meeting. Scrooge listened again, thinking that the explanation might lie here.

He knew these men, also, perfectly. They were men of business: very wealthy, and of great importance. He had made a point always of standing well in their esteem: in a business point of view, that is; strictly in a business point of view.

"How are you?" said one.

"How are you?" returned the other.

"Well!" said the first. "Old Scratch has got his own at last, hey?"

"So I am told," returned the second. "Cold, isn't it?"

"Seasonable for Christmas time. You're not a skater, I suppose?"

"No. No. Something else to think of. Good morning!"

Not another word. That was their greeting, their conversation, and their parting.

Scrooge was at first inclined to be surprised that the Spirit should attach importance to conversations apparently so trivial; but feeling assured that they must have some hidden purpose, he set himself to consider what it was likely to be. They could scarcely be supposed to have any bearing, on the death of Jacob, his old partner, for that was Past, and this Ghost's province was the Future. Nor could he think of any one immediately connected with himself, to whom he could apply them. But nothing doubting that to whomsoever they applied they had some latent

moral for his own improvement, he resolved to treasure up every word he heard, and everything he saw; and especially to observe the shadow of himself when it appeared. For he had an expectation that the conduct of his future self would give him the clew he missed, and would render the solution of these riddles easy.

He looked about in that very place for his own image; but another man stood in his accustomed corner, and though the clock pointed to his usual time of day for being there, he saw no likeness of himself among the multitudes that poured in through the Porch. It gave him little surprise, however; for he had been revolving in his mind a change of life, and thought and hoped he saw his new-born resolutions carried out in this.

Quiet and dark, beside him stood the Phantom, with its outstretched hand. When he aroused himself from his thoughtful quest, he fancied from the turn of the hand, and its situation in reference to himself, that the unseen eyes were looking at him keenly. It made him shudder, and feel very cold.

They left the busy scene, and went into an obscure part of the town, where Scrooge had never penetrated before, although he recognized its situation, and its bad repute. The ways were foul and narrow; the shops and houses wretched; the people half-naked, drunken, slipshod, ugly. Alleys and archways, like so many cesspools, disgorged their offences of smell, and dirt, and life, upon the straggling streets; and the whole quarter reeked with crime, with filth, and misery.

Far in this den of infamous resort, there was a low-browed, beetling shop,¹⁰³ below a pent-house¹⁰⁴

roof, where iron, old rags, bottles, bones, and greasy offal, were bought. Upon the floor within, were piled up heaps of rusty keys, nails, chains, hinges, files, scales, weights, and refuse iron of all kinds. Secrets that few would like to scrutinize were bred and hidden in mountains of unseemly rags, masses of corrupt fat, and sepulchres of bones. Sitting in among the wares he dealt in, by a charcoal-stove, made of old bricks, was a gray-haired rascal, nearly seventy years of age; who had screened himself from the cold air without, by a frowzy curtaining of miscellaneous tatters, hung upon a line; and smoked his pipe in all the luxury of calm retirement.

Scrooge and the Phantom came into the presence of this man, just as a woman with a heavy bundle slunk into the shop. But she had scarcely entered, when another woman, similarly laden, came in too; and she was closely followed by a man in faded black, who was no less startled by the sight of them, than they had been upon the recognition of each other. After a short period of blank astonishment, in which the old man with the pipe had joined them, they all three burst into a laugh.

"Let the charwoman alone to be the first!" cried she who had entered first. "Let the laundress alone to be the second; and let the undertaker's man alone to be the third. Look here, old Joe, here's a chance! If we haven't all three met here without meaning it!"

"You couldn't have met in a better place," said old Joe, removing his pipe from his mouth. "Come into the parlor. You were made free of it long ago, you know; and the other two an't strangers. Stop till I shut the door of the shop. Ah! How it skreeks! There an't such a rusty bit of metal in the place as its

own hinges, I believe; and I'm sure there's no such old bones here, as mine. Ha, ha! We're all suitable to our calling, we're well matched. Come into the parlor. Come into the parlor."

The parlor was the space behind the screen of rags. The old man raked the fire together with an old stair-rod and having trimmed his smoky lamp (for it was night) with the stem of his pipe, put it in his mouth again.

While he did this, the woman who had already spoken threw her bundle on the floor, and sat down in a flaunting manner on a stool; crossing her elbows on her knees, and looking with a bold defiance at the other two.

"What odds then! What odds, Mrs. Dilber?" said the woman. "Every person has a right to take care of themselves. *He* always did!"

"That's true, indeed!" said the laundress. "No man more so."

"Why, then, don't stand staring as if you was afraid, woman; who's the wiser? We're not going to pick holes in each other's coats, I suppose?"

"No, indeed!" said Mrs. Dilber and the man together. "We should hope not."

"Very well, then!" cried the woman. "That's enough. Who's the worse for the loss of a few things like these? Not a dead man, I suppose."

"No, indeed," said Mrs. Dilber, laughing.

"If he wanted to keep 'em after he was dead, a wicked old screw," pursued the woman, "why wasn't he natural in his lifetime? If he had been, he'd have had somebody to look after him when he was struck with death, instead of lying gasping out his last there, alone by himself."

"It's the truest word that ever was spoke," said Mrs. Dilber. "It's a judgment on him."

"I wish it was a little heavier one," replied the woman; "and it should have been, you may depend upon it, if I could have laid my hands on anything else. Open that bundle, old Joe, and let me know the value of it. Speak out plain. I'm not afraid to be the first, nor afraid for them to see it. We knew pretty well that we were helping ourselves, before we met here, I believe. It's no sin. Open the bundle, Joe."

But the gallantry of her friends would not allow of this; and the man in faded black, mounting the breach first, produced *his* plunder. It was not extensive. A seal or two, a pencil-case, a pair of sleeve-buttons, and a brooch¹⁰⁵ of no great value, were all. They were severally examined and appraised by old Joe, who chalked the sums he was disposed to give for each, upon the wall, and added them up into a total when he found there was nothing more to come.

"That's your account," said Joe, "and I wouldn't give another sixpence, if I was to be boiled for not doing it. Who's next?"

Mrs. Dilber was next. Sheets and towels, a little wearing apparel, two old-fashioned silver teaspoons, a pair of sugar-tongs, and a few boots. Her account was stated on the wall in the same manner.

"I always give too much to ladies. It's a weakness of mine, and that's the way I ruin myself," said old Joe. "That's your account. If you asked me for another penny, and made it an open question, I'd repent of being so liberal and knock off half-a-crown."

"And now undo *my* bundle, Joe," said the first woman.

Joe went down on his knees for the greater con-

venience of opening it, and having unfastened a great many knots, dragged out a large and heavy roll of some dark stuff.

"What do you call this?" said Joe. "Bed-curtains!"

"Ah!" returned the woman, laughing and leaning forward on her crossed arms. "Bed-curtains!"

"You don't mean to say you took 'em down, rings and all, with him lying there?" said Joe.

"Yes I do," replied the woman. "Why not?"

"You were born to make your fortune," said Joe, "and you'll certainly do it."

"I certainly shan't hold my hand, when I can get anything in it by reaching it out, for the sake of such a man as he was, I promise you, Joe," returned the woman, coolly. "Don't drop that oil upon the blankets, now."

"His blankets?" asked Joe.

"Whose else's do you think?" replied the woman. "He isn't likely to take cold without 'em, I dare say."

"I hope he didn't die of anything catching? Eh?" said old Joe, stopping in his work, and looking up.

"Don't you be afraid of that," returned the woman. "I ain't so fond of his company that I'd loiter about him for such things, if he did. Ah! you may look through that shirt till your eyes ache; but you won't find a hole in it, nor a threadbare place. It's the best he had, and a fine one too. They'd have wasted it, if it hadn't been for me."

"What do you call wasting of it?" asked old Joe.

"Putting it on him to be buried in, to be sure," replied the woman with a laugh. "Somebody was fool enough to do it, but I took it off again. If calico ain't good enough for such a purpose, it isn't good

enough for anything. It's quite as becoming to the body. He can't look uglier than he did in that one."

Scrooge listened to this dialogue in horror. As they sat grouped about their spoil, in the scanty light afforded by the old man's lamp, he viewed them with a detestation and disgust, which could hardly have been greater, though they had been obscene demons, marketing the corpse itself.

"Ha, ha!" laughed the same woman, when old Joe, producing a flannel bag with money in it, told out their several gains upon the ground. "This is the end of it, you see! He frightened every one away from him when he was alive, to profit us when he was dead! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Spirit!" said Scrooge, shuddering from head to foot. "I see, I see. The case of this unhappy man might be my own. My life tends that way, now. Merciful Heaven, what is this!"

He recoiled in terror, for the scene had changed, and now he almost touched a bed: a bare, uncurtained bed: on which, beneath a ragged sheet, there lay a something covered up, which, though it was dumb, announced itself in awful language.

The room was very dark, too dark to be observed with any accuracy, though Scrooge glanced round it in obedience to a secret impulse, anxious to know what kind of room it was. A pale light, rising in the outer air, fell straight upon the bed; and on it, plundered and bereft, unwatched, unwept, uncared for, was the body of this man.

Scrooge glanced towards the Phantom. Its steady hand was pointed to the head. The cover was so carelessly adjusted that the slightest raising of it, the motion of a finger upon Scrooge's part, would have

disclosed the face. He thought of it, felt how easy it would be to do, and longed to do it; but had no more power to withdraw the veil than to dismiss the spectre at his side.

Oh cold, cold, rigid, dreadful Death, set up thine altar here, and dress it with such terrors as thou hast at thy command: for this is thy dominion! But of the loved, revered, and honored head, thou canst not turn one hair to thy dread purposes, or make one feature odious. It is not that the hand is heavy and will fall down when released; it is not that the heart and pulse are still; but that the hand was open, generous, and true; the heart brave, warm, and tender; and the pulse a man's. Strike, Shadow, strike! And see his good deeds springing from the wound, to sow the world with life immortal!

No voice pronounced these words in Scrooge's ears, and yet he heard them when he looked upon the bed. He thought, if this man could be raised up now, what would be his foremost thoughts? Avarice, hard dealing, griping cares? They have brought him to a rich end, truly!

He lay in the dark empty house, with not a man, a woman, or a child, to say that he was kind to me in this or that, and for the memory of one kind word I will be kind to him. A cat was tearing at the door, and there was a sound of gnawing rats beneath the hearth-stone. What *they* wanted in the room of death, and why they were so restless and disturbed, Scrooge did not dare to think.

"Spirit!" he said, "this is a fearful place. In leaving it, I shall not leave its lesson, trust me. Let us go!"

Still the Ghost pointed with an unmoved finger to the head.

"I understand you," Scrooge returned, "and I would do it, if I could. But I have not the power, Spirit. I have not the power."

Again it seemed to look upon him.

"If there is any person in the town, who feels emotion caused by this man's death," said Scrooge quite agonized, "show that person to me, Spirit, I beseech you!"

The Phantom spread its dark robe before him for a moment, like a wing; and withdrawing it, revealed a room by daylight, where a mother and her children were.

She was expecting some one, and with anxious eagerness; for she walked up and down the room; started at every sound; looked out from the window; glanced at the clock; tried, but in vain, to work with her needle; and could hardly bear the voices of the children in their play.

At length the long-expected knock was heard. She hurried to the door, and met her husband; a man whose face was careworn and depressed, though he was young. There was a remarkable expression in it now; a kind of serious delight of which he felt ashamed, and which he struggled to repress.

He sat down to the dinner that had been hoarding for him by the fire; and when she asked him faintly what news (which was not until after a long silence), he appeared embarrassed how to answer.

"Is it good," she said, "or bad?"—to help him.

"Bad," he answered.

"We are quite ruined?"

"No. There is hope yet, Caroline."

"If *he* relents," she said, amazed, "there is! Nothing is past hope, if such a miracle has happened."

"He is past relenting," said her husband. "He is dead."

She was a mild and patient creature if her face spoke truth; but she was thankful in her soul to hear it, and she said so, with clasped hands. She prayed forgiveness the next moment, and was sorry; but the first was the emotion of the heart.

"What the half-drunken woman whom I told you of last night, said to me, when I tried to see him and obtain a week's delay; and what I thought was a mere excuse to avoid me; turns out to have been quite true. He was not only very ill, but dying, then."

"To whom will our debt be transferred?"

"I don't know. But before that time we shall be ready with the money; and even though we were not, it would be bad fortune indeed to find so merciless a creditor in his successor. We may sleep to-night with light hearts, Caroline!"

Yes. Soften it as they would, their hearts were lighter. The children's faces, hushed, and clustered round to hear what they so little understood, were brighter; and it was a happier house for this man's death! The only emotion that the Ghost could show him, caused by the event, was one of pleasure.

"Let me see some tenderness connected with a death," said Scrooge; "or that dark chamber, Spirit, which we left just now, will be forever present to me."

The Ghost conducted him through several streets familiar to his feet; and as they went along, Scrooge looked here and there to find himself, but nowhere was he to be seen. They entered poor Bob Cratchit's

house; the dwelling he had visited before; and found the mother and the children seated round the fire.

Quiet. Very quiet. The noisy little Cratchits were as still as statues in one corner, and sat looking up at Peter, who had a book before him. The mother and her daughters were engaged in sewing. But surely they were very quiet!

“‘And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them.’”

Where had Scrooge heard those words? He had not dreamed them. The boy must have read them out, as he and the Spirit crossed the threshold. Why did he not go on?

The mother laid her work upon the table, and put her hand up to her face.

“The color hurts my eyes,” she said.

The color? Ah, poor Tiny Tim!

“They’re better now again,” said Cratchit’s wife. “It makes them weak by candlelight; and I wouldn’t show weak eyes to your father when he comes home, for the world. It must be near his time.”

“Past it rather,” Peter answered, shutting up his book. “But I think he’s walked a little slower than he used, these few last evenings, mother.”

They were very quiet again. At last she said, and in a steady cheerful voice, that only faltered once:—

“I have known him walk with—I have known him walk with Tiny Tim upon his shoulder, very fast indeed.”

“And so have I,” cried Peter. “Often.”

“And so have I,” exclaimed another. So had all.

“But he was so very light to carry,” she resumed, intent upon her work, “and his father loved him so,

that it was no trouble—no trouble. And there is your father at the door!”

She hurried out to meet him; and little Bob in his comforter—he had need of it, poor fellow—came in. His tea was ready for him on the hob, and they all tried who should help him to it most. Then the two young Cratchits got upon his knees and laid, each child a little cheek, against his face, as if they said, “Don’t mind it, father. Don’t be grieved!”

Bob was very cheerful with them, and spoke pleasantly to all the family. He looked at the work upon the table, and praised the industry and speed of Mrs. Cratchit and the girls. They would be done long before Sunday he said.

“Sunday! You went to-day, then, Robert?” said his wife.

“Yes, my dear,” returned Bob. “I wish you could have gone. It would have done you good to see how green a place it is. But you’ll see it often. I promised him that I would walk there on a Sunday. My little, little child!” cried Bob. “My little child!”

He broke down all at once. He couldn’t help it. If he could have helped it, he and his child would have been farther apart perhaps than they were.

He left the room, and went up stairs into the room above, which was lighted cheerfully, and hung with Christmas. There was a chair set close beside the child, and there were signs of some one having been there lately. Poor Bob sat down in it, and when he had thought a little and composed himself, he kissed the little face. He was reconciled to what had happened, and went down again quite happy.

They drew about the fire, and talked; the girls and mother working still. Bob told them of the extra-

ordinary kindness of Mr. Scrooge's nephew, whom he had scarcely seen but once, and who, meeting him in the street that day, and seeing that he looked a little—"just a little down you know," said Bob, inquired what had happened to distress him. "On which," said Bob, "for he is the pleasantest-spoken gentleman you ever heard, I told him. 'I am heartily sorry for it, Mr. Cratchit,' he said, 'and heartily sorry for your good wife.' By the bye, how he ever knew *that*, I don't know."

"Knew what, my dear?"

"Why, that you were a good wife," replied Bob.

"Everybody knows that!" said Peter.

"Very well observed, my boy!" cried Bob. "I hope they do. 'Heartily sorry,' he said, 'for your good wife. If I can be of service to you in any way,' he said, giving me his card, 'that's where I live. Pray come to me.' Now, it wasn't," cried Bob, "for the sake of anything he might be able to do for us, so much as for his kind way, that this was quite delightful. It really seemed as if he had known our Tiny Tim, and felt with us."

"I'm sure he's a good soul!" said Mrs. Cratchit.

"You would be surer of it, my dear," returned Bob, "if you saw and spoke to him. I shouldn't be at all surprised, mark what I say, if he got Peter a better situation."

"Only hear that, Peter," said Mrs. Cratchit.

"And then," cried one of the girls, "Peter will be keeping company with some one, and setting up for himself."

"Get along with you!" retorted Peter, grinning.

"It's just as likely as not," said Bob, "one of these days; though there's plenty of time for that, my dear.

But however and whenever we part from one another, I am sure we shall none of us forget poor Tiny Tim—shall we—or this first parting that there was among us?”

“Never, father!” cried they all.

“And I know,” said Bob, “I know, my dears, that when we recollect how patient and how mild he was; although he was a little, little child; we shall not quarrel easily among ourselves, and forget poor Tiny Tim in doing it.”

“No, never, father!” they all cried again.

“I am very happy,” said little Bob, “I am very happy!”

Mrs. Cratchit kissed him, his daughters kissed him, the two young Cratchits kissed him, and Peter and himself shook hands. Spirit of Tiny Tim, thy childish essence was from God!

“Spectre,” said Scrooge, “something informs me that our parting moment is at hand. I know it, but I know not how. Tell me what man that was whom we saw lying dead?”

The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come conveyed him, as before—though at a different time, he thought: indeed, there seemed no order in these latter visions, save that they were in the Future—into the resorts of business men, but showed him not himself. Indeed, the Spirit did not stay for anything, but went straight on, as to the end just now desired, until besought by Scrooge to tarry for a moment.

“This court,” said Scrooge, “through which we hurry now, is where my place of occupation is, and has been for a length of time. I see the house. Let me behold what I shall be, in days to come!”

The Spirit stopped; the hand was pointed elsewhere.

"The house is yonder," Scrooge exclaimed. "Why do you point away?"

The inexorable finger underwent no change.

Scrooge hastened to the window of his office, and looked in. It was an office still, but not his. The furniture was not the same, and the figure in the chair was not himself. The Phantom pointed as before.

He joined it once again, and wondering why and whither he had gone, accompanied it until they reached an iron gate. He paused to look round before entering.

A churchyard. Here, then, the wretched man whose name he had now to learn, lay underneath the ground. It was a worthy place. Walled in by houses; overrun by grass and weeds, the growth of vegetation's death, not life; choked up with too much burying; fat with repleted appetite. A worthy place!

The Spirit stood among the graves, and pointed down to one. He advanced towards it trembling. The Phantom was exactly as it had been, but he dreaded that he saw new meaning in its solemn shape.

"Before I draw nearer to that stone to which you point," said Scrooge, "answer me one question. Are these the shadows of the things that will be, or are they shadows of things that may be, only?"

Still the Ghost pointed downward to the grave by which it stood.

"Men's courses will foreshadow certain ends, to which, if persevered in, they must lead," said Scrooge. "But if the courses be departed from, the ends will change. Say it is thus with what you show me!"

The Spirit was immovable as ever.

Scrooge crept towards it, trembling as he went; and following the finger, read upon the stone of the neglected grave his own name, EBENEZER SCROOGE.

"Am *I* that man who lay upon the bed?" he cried, upon his knees.

The finger pointed from the grave to him, and back again.

"No, Spirit! Oh, no, no!"

The finger still was there.

"Spirit!" he cried, tight clutching at its robe, "hear me! I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I must have been but for this intercourse. Why show me this, if I am past all hope!"

For the first time the hand appeared to shake.

"Good Spirit," he pursued, as down upon the ground he fell before it: "Your nature intercedes for me, and pities me. Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life!"

The kind hand trembled.

"I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach. Oh, tell me I may sponge away the writing on this stone!"

In his agony, he caught the spectral hand. It sought to free itself, but he was strong in his entreaty, and detained it. The Spirit, stronger yet, repulsed him.

Holding up his hands in one last prayer to have his fate reversed, he saw an alteration in the Phantom's hood and dress. It shrank, collapsed, and dwindled down to a bedpost.

STAVE FIVE

THE END OF IT

YES! and the bedpost was his own. The bed was his own, the room was his own. Best and happiest of all, the Time before him was his own, to make amends in!

"I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future!" Scrooge repeated, as he scrambled out of bed. "The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. Oh Jacob Marley! Heaven, and the Christmas Time be praised for this! I say it on my knees, old Jacob, on my knees!"

He was so fluttered and so glowing with his good intentions, that his broken voice would scarcely answer to his call. He had been sobbing violently in his conflict with the Spirit, and his face was wet with tears.

"They are not torn down," cried Scrooge, folding one of his bed-curtains in his arms, "they are not torn down, rings and all. They are here: I am here: the shadows of the things that would have been, may be dispelled. They will be. I know they will!"

His hands were busy with his garments all this time: turning them inside out, putting them on upside down, tearing them, mislaying them, making them parties to every kind of extravagance.

"I don't know what to do!" cried Scrooge, laughing and crying in the same breath; and making a perfect

Laocoön¹⁰⁶ of himself with his stockings. "I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy. I am as giddy as a drunken man. A Merry Christmas to everybody! A Happy New Year to all the world. Hallo here! Whoop! Hallo!"

He had frisked into the sitting room, and was now standing there: perfectly winded.

"There's the saucepan that the gruel was in!" cried Scrooge, starting off again and frisking round the fireplace. "There's the door, by which the Ghost of Jacob Marley entered! There's the window where I saw the wandering Spirits! It's all right, it's all true, it all happened. Ha, ha, ha!"

Really, for a man who had been out of practice for so many years, it was a splendid laugh, a most illustrious laugh. The father of a long, long line of brilliant laughs!

"I don't know what day of the month it is!" said Scrooge. "I don't know how long I've been among the Spirits. I don't know anything. I'm quite a baby. Never mind. I don't care. I'd rather be a baby. Hallo! Whoop! Hallo here!"

He was checked in his transports by the churches ringing out the lustiest peals he had ever heard. Clash, clang, hammer, ding, dong, bell. Bell, dong, ding, hammer, clang, clash! Oh, glorious, glorious!

Running to the window, he opened it, and put out his head. No fog, no mist; clear, bright, jovial, stirring, cold; cold, piping for the blood to dance to; golden sunlight; heavenly sky; sweet fresh air; merry bells. Oh, glorious. Glorious!

"What's to-day?" cried Scrooge, calling downward

to a boy in Sunday clothes, who perhaps had loitered in to look about him.

"EH?" returned the boy, with all his might of wonder.

"What's to-day, my fine fellow?" said Scrooge.

"To-day!" replied the boy. "Why CHRISTMAS DAY."

"It's Christmas Day!" said Scrooge to himself. "I haven't missed it. The Spirits have done it all in one night. They can do anything they like. Of course they can. Of course they can. Hallo, my fine fellow?"

"Hallo!" returned the boy.

"Do you know the poulterer's, in the next street but one, at the corner?" Scrooge inquired.

"I should hope I did," replied the lad.

"An intelligent boy!" said Scrooge. "A remarkable boy! Do you know whether they've sold the prize turkey that was hanging up there? Not the little turkey: the big one?"

"What, the one as big as me?" returned the boy.

"What a delightful boy!" said Scrooge. "It's a pleasure to talk to him. Yes, my buck!"

"It's hanging there now," replied the boy.

"Is it?" said Scrooge. "Go and buy it."

"Walk-ER!"¹⁰⁷ exclaimed the boy.

"No, no," said Scrooge, "I am in earnest. Go and buy it, and tell 'em to bring it here, that I may give them the direction where to take it. Come back with the man, and I'll give you a shilling. Come back with him in less than five minutes, and I'll give you half-a-crown!"

The boy was off like a shot. He must have had a

steady hand at a trigger who could have got a shot off half so fast.

"I'll send it to Bob Cratchit's!" whispered Scrooge, rubbing his hands, and splitting with a laugh. "He shan't know who sends it. It's twice the size of Tiny Tim. Joe Miller¹⁰⁸ never made such a joke as sending it to Bob's will be!"

The hand in which he wrote the address was not a steady one, but write it he did, somehow, and went down stairs to open the street door, ready for the coming of the poulterer's man. As he stood there, waiting his arrival, the knocker caught his eye.

"I shall love it, as long as I live!" cried Scrooge, patting it with his hand. "I scarcely ever looked at it before. What an honest expression it has in its face! It's a wonderful knocker!—Here's the turkey. Hallo! Whoop! How are you! Merry Christmas!"

It *was* a Turkey! He could never have stood upon his legs, that bird. He would have snapped 'em short off in a minute, like sticks of sealing-wax.

"Why, it's impossible to carry that to Camden Town," said Scrooge. "You must have a cab."

The chuckle with which he said this, and the chuckle with which he paid for the turkey, and the chuckle with which he paid for the cab, and the chuckle with which he recompensed the boy, were only to be exceeded by the chuckle with which he sat down breathless in his chair again, and chuckled till he cried.

Shaving was not an easy task, for his hand continued to shake very much; and shaving requires attention, even when you don't dance while you are at it. But if he had cut the end of his nose off, he would have put a piece of sticking-plaster over it, and been quite satisfied.

He dressed himself "all in his best," and at last got out into the streets. The people were by this time pouring forth, as he had seen them with the Ghost of Christmas Present; and walking with his hands behind him, Scrooge regarded every one with a delighted smile. He looked so irresistibly pleasant, in a word, that three or four good-humored fellows said, "Good morning, Sir! A Merry Christmas to you!" And Scrooge said often afterwards, that of all the blithe sounds he had ever heard, those were the blithest in his ears.

He had not gone far, when coming towards him he beheld the portly gentleman, who had walked into his counting-house the day before and said, "Scrooge and Marley's, I believe?" It sent a pang across his heart to think how this old gentleman would look upon him when they met; but he knew what path lay straight before him, and he took it.

"My dear Sir," said Scrooge, quickening his pace, and taking the old gentleman by both his hands. "How do you do? I hope you succeeded yesterday. It was very kind of you. A Merry Christmas to you, Sir!"

"Mr. Scrooge?"

"Yes," said Scrooge. "That is my name, and I fear it may not be pleasant to you. Allow me to ask your pardon. And will you have the goodness"—here Scrooge whispered in his ear.

"Lord bless me!" cried the gentleman, as if his breath were gone. "My dear Mr. Scrooge, are you serious?"

"If you please," said Mr. Scrooge. "Not a farthing¹⁰⁹ less. A great many back-payments are

included in it, I assure you. Will you do me that favor?"

"My dear Sir," said the other, shaking hands with him. "I don't know what to say to such munifi——"

"Don't say anything, please," retorted Scrooge. "Come and see me. Will you come and see me?"

"I will!" cried the old gentleman. And it was clear he meant to do it.

"Thank'ee," said Scrooge. "I am much obliged to you. I thank you fifty times. Bless you!"

He went to church, and walked about the streets, and watched the people hurrying to and fro, and patted children on the head, and questioned beggars, and looked down into the kitchens of houses, and up to the windows; and found that everything could yield him pleasure. He had never dreamed that any walk—that anything—could give him so much happiness. In the afternoon, he turned his steps towards his nephew's house.

He passed the door a dozen times, before he had the courage to go up and knock. But he made a dash, and did it.

"Is your master at home, my dear?" said Scrooge to the girl. Nice girl! Very.

"Yes, Sir."

"Where is he, my love?" said Scrooge.

"He's in the dining-room, Sir, along with mistress. I'll show you up stairs, if you please."

"Thank'ee. He knows," said Scrooge, with his hand already on the dining-room lock. "I'll go in here, my dear."

He turned it gently, and sidled his face in round the door. They were looking at the table (which was spread out in great array); for these young house-

keepers are always nervous on such points, and like to see that everything is right.

"Fred!" said Scrooge.

Dear heart alive, how his niece by marriage started! Scrooge had forgotten, for the moment, about her sitting in the corner with the footstool, or he wouldn't have done it, on any account.

"Why, bless my soul!" cried Fred, "who's that?"

"It's I. Your uncle Scrooge. I have come to dinner. Will you let me in, Fred?"

Let him in! It is a mercy he didn't shake his arm off. He was at home in five minutes. Nothing could be heartier. His niece looked just the same. So did Topper when *he* came. So did the plump sister, when *she* came. So did every one when *they* came. Wonderful party, wonderful games, wonderful unanimity, won-der-ful happiness!

But he was early at the office next morning. Oh, he was early there. If he could only be there first, and catch Bob Cratchit coming late! That was the thing he had set his heart upon.

And he did it; yes he did! The clock struck nine. No Bob. A quarter past. No Bob. He was full eighteen minutes and a half behind his time. Scrooge sat with his door wide open, that he might see him come into the Tank.

His hat was off, before he opened the door; his comforter too. He was on his stool in a jiffy; driving away with his pen, as if he were trying to overtake nine o'clock.

"Hallo!" growled Scrooge, in his accustomed voice as near as he could feign it. "What do you mean by coming here at this time of day?"

"I am very sorry, Sir," said Bob. "I *am* behind my time."

"You are?" repeated Scrooge. "Yes. I think you are. Step this way, Sir, if you please."

"It's only once a year, Sir," pleaded Bob, appearing from the Tank. "It shall not be repeated. I was making rather merry yesterday, Sir."

"Now, I'll tell you what, my friend," said Scrooge, "I am not going to stand this sort of thing any longer. And therefore," he continued, leaping from his stool, and giving Bob such a dig in the waistcoat that he staggered back into the Tank again, "and therefore I am about to raise your salary!"

Bob trembled, and got a little nearer to the ruler. He had a momentary idea of knocking Scrooge down with it; holding him; and calling to the people in the court for help and a strait waistcoat.

"A Merry Christmas, Bob!" said Scrooge, with an earnestness that could not be mistaken, as he clapped him on the back. "A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you for many a year! I'll raise your salary, and endeavor to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon,¹¹⁰ over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop,¹¹¹ Bob! Make up the fires, and buy another coal-scuttle before you dot another i, Bob Cratchit!"

Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more; and to Tiny Tim, who did NOT die, he was a second father. He became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew, or any other good old city, town, or borough, in the good old world. Some people

laughed to see the alteration in him, but he let them laugh, and little heeded them; for he was wise enough to know that nothing ever happened on this globe, for good, at which some people did not have their fill of laughter in the outset; and knowing that such as these would be blind anyway, he thought it quite as well that they should wrinkle up their eyes in grins, as have the malady in less attractive forms. His own heart laughed: and that was quite enough for him.

He had no further intercourse with Spirits, but lived upon the Total Abstinence¹¹² Principle, ever afterwards; and it was always said of him, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge. May that be truly said of us, and all of us! And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God Bless Us, Every One!

NOTES

Stave One

1. **carol.** A song of joy.

It is an old English custom, still practised, for bands of street musicians to go from house to house at Christmas, singing and playing Christmas Carols.

2. **stave.** A section of a piece of music.

3. **clerk.** The clerk of the parish.

4. **'Change.** Exchange. The Royal Exchange in London opposite the Bank of England is a center of trade like our Stock Exchange. Scrooge's financial standing was of the best.

5. **doornail.** The nail upon which the knocker strikes.

6. **wisdom of our ancestors.** Quoted from the *Speech on Conciliation with America*, by Edmund Burke in the House of Commons, in

1775, before the outbreak of the American Revolution.

7. **executor, etc.** Terms used in a will to designate the persons who receive bequests and those who carry out its provisions.
8. **Hamlet's Father.** The reference is to the first appearance of the ghost in Shakespere's play, "Hamlet."
9. **St. Paul's Churchyard.** The street around St. Paul's Cathedral. After Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's is the principal church in London.
10. **humbug.** Cheat. Nothing could be worse in the eyes of Scrooge who has made business his god.
11. **shilling.** An English silver coin like an American quarter-dollar and worth about as much.
12. **Bedlam.** Lunatic asylum. The word is derived from Bethlehem Hospital, an insane asylum in London, founded by Henry VIII.
13. **Union workhouse.** A poorhouse supported by several parishes.
14. **treadmill.** A mill with a wide wheel which has steps upon it. It was worked by persons, usually prisoners, treading upon the steps.
15. **Poor Law.** According to the law passed by Parliament in 1834, paupers were housed in Union Work houses.
16. **flaring links.** Torches made of lint or tow and pitch. "Flares" are still used in London to direct street traffic during heavy fogs.
17. **gothic.** A style of architecture distinguished by high buildings with steep roofs, large windows, and pointed arches.
18. **Mansion House.** The official residence of the Lord Mayor of London.
19. **Saint Dunstan.** An English statesman of the tenth century who became Archbishop of Canterbury. According to an Anglo-Saxon legend St. Dunstan, while at his blacksmith's

forge, was tempted by the Devil. He seized the Evil One by the nose with his red-hot pincers.

20. **God bless you, merry gentlemen!**

May nothing you dismay!

The opening lines of a famous Christmas carol.

21. **half-a-crown.** A crown is an English silver coin stamped with a crown. It is worth five shillings.

22. **Cornhill.** A street in the financial district of London. A grain market was held there in olden times.

23. **Camden Town.** Formerly a suburb, now a part of London. While Dickens was a boy and worked in a shoe blacking factory, he lived in Camden Town.

24. **Genius.** According to oriental belief, one of the spirits, either of good or evil, who guide the lives of men.

25. **knocker.** Instead of a doorbell, a metal knocker may be fastened to the door for the use of visitors. Some knockers are in the form of a human face or an animal head.

26. **corporation, aldermen, and livery.** City officials of every rank.

27. **pigtail.** Men formerly wore their hair long, braided or tied into a queue.

28. **coach and six.** The largest coaches were drawn by three pairs of horses. Of a law which is carelessly drawn and, therefore, open to evasion, it is said that one can drive a coach and six through it.

29. **splinter-bar.** The cross bar, or whiffle-tree of a wagon to which the horse is hitched by means of the traces.

30. **locomotive.** *Locus* means place; *motus* means motion.

31. **dip.** Candle.

32. **hob.** The flat part of a grate in a fireplace, upon which dishes may be warmed.

33. **Dutch merchant.** When William of Orange became king of England in 1689, many of his fellow Hollanders followed him to England.
34. **Cain and Abel.** Sons of Adam and Eve. Cain, who killed Abel, was the first murderer.
35. **Pharaoh's daughter** found the infant Moses in the bulrushes along the Nile.
36. **Queen of Sheba.** The wealthy queen who visited King Solomon to inspect the splendors of his court.
37. **Belshazzar.** The last king of Babylon. On the night of a great feast at which the prophet Daniel read the mysterious handwriting upon the wall, Belshazzar was slain and his kingdom captured by the Medes and Persians.
38. **Apostles.** The twelve disciples of Jesus most closely associated with Him in His work.
39. **Prophet's rod.** The rod of Aaron.
40. **bell.** Before the invention of electric bells servants were called by a bell which was rung by pulling a wire attached to it and strung through the house.
41. **ledger.** A large book in which accounts are kept.
42. **deed.** A legal document by which the title to real estate is given to another person.
43. **bowels.** The ancients thought that the abdomen was the seat of pity and kindness; hence the phrase "bowels of compassion."
44. **kerchief.** A cloth for covering the head.
45. **hot vapor.** Objects seen through waves of hot air seem to tremble.
46. **goblin.** An imaginary evil spirit of grotesque appearance which lives in woods and grottos.
47. **fathom.** Two yards in length.
48. **ministers.** Those who render service.
49. **ward.** A division of a city. Here the word means the civil officers of the ward in which Scrooge lived.
50. **Wise Men.** Also called the Magi and the

Three Kings. Led by the Star of Bethlehem they came from the East to worship at the cradle of the Infant Jesus.

Stave Two

51. **repeater.** A watch that strikes the hour whenever the indicator is pressed. One can thus tell the approximate time without seeing the face.
52. **First of Exchange.** The original of a promissory note. Copies, called Second and Third of Exchange, respectively, are usually made for use in case the First of Exchange is lost.
53. **United States security.** After the panic of 1837 several States refused to pay the bonds on which they had borrowed money from foreign investors as well as from Americans.
54. **covered.** To put on his cap.
55. **lane.** A narrow road.
56. **cupola.** A small dome.
57. **Ali Baba.** Hero of "The Forty Thieves," a tale in *The Arabian Nights*. He overheard the magic password "Open, Sesame," entered the robbers' cave, and obtained their treasure.
58. **Valentine and Orson.** Twin sons of the Emperor of Constantinople. Orson, (French *ours*, Latin *ursus*) was kidnapped by a bear and grew up a wild man. Valentine was reared in the palace of King Pepin and became a courtier.
59. **what's his name.** Benreddin Hassan. In a tale of *The Arabian Nights* the genii prevent the Sultan's hump-backed groom from marrying the princess and she weds the hero Benreddin.
60. **Damascus.** A walled city of Palestine noted for its beauty and romantic history.
61. **Genii.** Plural of **genius**; see note 24, p. 109.
62. **Robin Crusoe.** Robinson Crusoe, the English sailor who in Defoe's story, was shipwrecked

on an island where he lived for years with his parrot and his man Friday.

Friday. The black savage whom Robinson Crusoe rescued from the cannibals.

63. **sweep.** A curved driveway.

64. **Welsh wig.** A cap made of worsted.

65. **porter.** A malt beverage.

66. **forfeits.** A game in which each player who misses gives up something which he afterwards redeems by paying a playful fine.

67. **negus.** A sort of punch named after Colonel Negus who originated it.

68. **Sir Roger de Coverley.** A dance somewhat like the Virginia Reel, named for the kindly hero of *The Spectator*.

69. **cut.** A dancing step performed by springing into the air and quickly crossing the feet several times.

70. **pound.** Twenty shillings. About five dollars in American money.

71. **idol.** The image of a god; any object that is worshipped or greatly loved.

72. **the celebrated herd.** The reference is to a poem by William Wordsworth, *Written in March*.

The cattle are grazing,

Their heads never raising;

There are forty feeding like one.

73. **there he sat alone.** Compare the undoubted bargain mentioned on page—.

Stave Three

74. **spontaneous combustion.** Catching fire of itself without being lighted from another flame. A mystery to the popular mind, although the scientific explanation of chemical action is not hard to understand.

75. **petrification.** (*petri* means rock, *faction* making). Converting into stone.

76. **game.** Birds and animals hunted for sport.

77. **brawn.** Smoked pork.
78. **twelfth-cakes.** Cakes made for the celebration of Twelfth Night (Epiphany) which is twelve days after Christmas. A bean is baked into the cake. Whoever gets the piece containing the bean is chairman of the party.
79. **Plenty's horn.** (*cornu* means horn; *copia* means plenty). A cornucopia, overflowing with fruit and flowers is the symbol of prosperity.
80. **Christmas Present.** This is a description of Saint Nicholas as he was pictured at that time. Compare it with our notion of what Santa Claus looks like.
81. **elder brothers.** One brother for each year of the Christian era.
82. **Biffin.** A red cooking apple. Norfolk is a county in England.
83. **daw.** A bird related to the crow; a jackdaw. Here the word means conceited persons who criticize Christmas.
84. **carrying their dinners to the baker's shops,** to be cooked in the baker's ovens. To this day many English houses are not heated and some lack even a kitchen stove.
85. **You would deprive them.** Reformers who sought to enforce Sunday observance agitated for the repeal of the law passed in 1821 which allowed baker's shops to remain open Sunday morning to cook food brought in by their customers. The movement was successful and the practice was abolished.
86. **bob.** A shilling.
87. **sixpence.** A silver coin, a half shilling.
88. **blew the fire.** With a bellows.
89. **ubiquitous.** Everywhere at once.
90. **grace.** A prayer of thanks said at meals.
91. **quartern.** A gill.
92. **Ogre.** A giant, fabled to devour children.
93. **kenned.** Knew. An old-fashioned Scotch and English word. Dickens used it here for its poetic effect.

- 94. **furze.** A thorny evergreen shrub which bears yellow flowers.
- 95. **league.** About three miles.
- 96. **dessert.** In England dessert means fruit, nuts, and raisins.
- 97. **Glee.** A part song for three or more voices, without an instrumental accompaniment. Compare glee club.
- 98. **Catch.** A round. A song in which two or more parts follow each other in harmony.
- 99. **sexton.** The caretaker of a church. He is sometimes the grave digger.

Stave Four

- 100. **City.** The City of London is but a small section about one square mile in area, in the heart of modern London.
- 101. **seals.** Stamps engraved in gold or other metal for making an impression in sealing wax, and used to ratify or seal a document and also to close or seal a package. They are worn as ornaments on a watch chain or as fobs.
- 102. **black gloves.** Given to mourners at funerals.
- 103. **shop.** A junkshop.
- 104. **penthouse.** A shed.
- 105. **brooch.** A breastpin.

Stave Five

- 106. **Laocoön.** A priest, the son of Priam, king of Troy. He offended Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom, and, with his two sons was killed by gigantic serpents which came out of the sea. There is a famous statue called "The Laocoön."
- 107. **Walker.** A slang expression of disbelief.
- 108. **Joe Miller.** A comic actor who died in 1738. The next year Joe Miller's joke book was published. It is not likely that he wrote it.

109. **farthing.** The smallest English coin, of copper, half a cent.
110. **this very afternoon.** In England it is still the custom for business men to stop work about four o'clock and have tea.
111. **bishop.** A beverage.
112. **Total Abstinence.** The complete disuse of intoxicating drink in any form and for any purpose.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND PROJECTS

I.

In rewriting each of the following statements use the words in italics which you think most accurate.

Do Not Mark the Book

1. The story lasts *one week, three days, over night, one day.*
2. As a boy Scrooge was *playful, studious, lonesome, affectionate.*
3. As a man, Scrooge was a *philanthopist, miser, merchant, spendthrift.*
4. He afterward became *religious, generous, joyful, repentant.*
5. This was the result of *his nephew's pleadings, fright, memory of his childhood, sickness, a dream.*
6. Fred invited Scrooge to Christmas dinner because *he was sorry for him, they were related, it was his duty, his wife told him to, he wanted to be his heir.*
7. Christmas Present was *invisible, luminous, jovial, sarcastic.*

8. Mrs. Cratchit wore a *gay, expensive, shabby; elaborate* dress.
9. Tiny Tim had *no, one* sister, *two* sisters.
10. Mr. Fezziwig was *lame, hospitable, aged, agile*.

II.

Complete the following statements.

Do Not Mark the Book

A.

1. Dickens's parents belonged — — —.
2. Charles Dickens — — — university.
3. Dickens became — while still a young man.
4. The battle of Waterloo was fought — Dickens was born.
5. During Dickens's first visit to the United States the — War was in progress.
6. At that time there were — — in the United States.
7. At that time — had not yet been discovered in California.
8. When Dickens visited the United States a second time, the Civil War — —.
9. Abraham Lincoln was then —.

B.

1. The scene of *A Christmas Carol* is laid in —.
2. Each ghost appeared to Scrooge at — —.
3. Mr. Scrooge's first name was —.
4. The surname of Scrooge's nephew was —.

5. Scrooge — — — his nephew would be a fitting member of Parliament.
6. Scrooge had a better fire — — — — —.
7. Scrooge was not to blame for becoming ———.
8. ——— was Scrooge's fellow clerk in Fezziwig's office.

III

Prepare a set of statements like the following; and let other students distinguish the true from the false.

1. Bob Cratchit hated his employer. **False.**
2. Tiny Tim did not die. **True.**

IV

1. What establishments did Mr. Scrooge support? How?
2. What did Mr. Scrooge think makes people see ghosts?
3. Did Christmas Past lay its hand upon its own heart or upon Scrooge's heart?
4. Why did the Spanish onion glance demurely at the hung-up mistletoe?
5. In what sense was Mr. Scrooge Founder of the Feast?
6. How did Mr. Scrooge's opinion of plum pudding differ from that of the Cratchit's?
7. What mistake in grammar does Fred make?
8. How did Scrooge light his house at night? his office? How did Bob Cratchit light his house? Fred? How were the streets lighted?

9. What word was the portly gentleman about to pronounce when Scrooge interrupted him?
10. Are riches a sure cause of happiness? What is?

V

1. Arrange the characters in the order of your liking for them.
2. What evidences are there that this is not a modern story?
3. Name the four ghosts and tell the mission of each.
4. What is Scrooge's favorite exclamation? when we first make his acquaintance? When does he use it for the last time? What is the last reference to it in the story? After his reform what exclamations does Scrooge use? What does the change show?
5. What episode in Stave V proves that Scrooge no longer wants "to edge his way along the crowded paths of life, warning all human sympathy to keep its distance"?
6. Why did Scrooge think of Jacob Marley as soon as he awoke on Christmas morning?
7. What is the purpose of this story?
8. Make a list of the games mentioned. Mark with an asterisk those you have played.
9. Prepare a table in which shall appear in parallel columns the chief events that occurred in England and America during the lifetime of Dickens.
10. Make a list of important inventions made during Dickens's lifetime.

VI

1. Indicate where the following divisions of Stave I begin and end. 1. Introductory Description of

- Scrooge. 2. In the Counting House. 3. Scrooge at Home. 4. Marley's Ghost. Make a similar topical analysis of the other Staves.
2. Arrange in alphabetical order the synonyms for ghost which the author uses.
 3. Select pithy sentences which express noble thoughts.
 4. Make a list of the puns in the story.
 5. Choose from each Stave the passage you like best and learn it by heart.
 6. Select from the text passages which illustrate Dickens's (a) humor (b) indignation at wrong (c) sympathy for the oppressed (d) close observation (e) knowledge of human nature (f) liveliness (g) choice of words (h) confidential chats with the reader.
 7. Make a collection of illustrations for *A Christmas Carol*.

THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH

The Cricket on the Hearth is the third of Dickens's annual Christmas stories. It was written in 1845.

A Christmas Carol, the first of the Christmas stories had been published in 1843. The second story, *The Chimes*, had appeared in 1844.

The Cricket on the Hearth has a better plot and is more dramatic than any other story that Dickens wrote. Dickens himself wrote no introduction to the story but dedicated it to Lord Francis Jeffrey the leading literary critic of the time, who had cordially praised the *Christmas Carol*.

The Cricket on the Hearth has been dramatized. Joseph Jefferson, the eminent American actor played the appealing rôle of Caleb Plummer. Mr. Jefferson wrote, "The story can be acted from the book itself, having all the completeness and direct motives that go to make a play."

THE CRICKET¹ ON THE HEARTH²

A Fairy Tale of Home

CHIRP THE FIRST

THE kettle began it! Don't tell me what Mrs. Peerybingle said. I know better. Mrs. Peerybingle may leave it on record to the end of time that she couldn't say which of them began it; but, I say the Kettle did. I ought to know, I hope? The Kettle began it, full five minutes by the little waxy-faced Dutch clock³ in the corner before the Cricket uttered a chirp.

As if the clock hadn't finished striking, and the convulsive little Haymaker at the top of it, jerking away right and left with a scythe in front of a Moorish Palace, hadn't mowed down half an acre of imaginary grass before the Cricket joined in at all!

Why, I am not naturally positive. Every one knows that. I wouldn't set my own opinion against the opinion of Mrs. Peerybingle, unless I were quite sure, on any account whatever. Nothing should induce me. But this is a question of fact. And the fact is, that the Kettle began it, at least five minutes before the Cricket gave any sign of being in existence. Contradict me: and I'll say ten.

Let me narrate exactly how it happened. I should have proceeded to do so, in my very first word, but for this plain consideration—if I am to tell a story

I must begin at the beginning;⁴ and how is it possible to begin at the beginning, without beginning at the Kettle?

It appeared as if there were a sort of match, or trial of skill, you must understand, between the Kettle and the Cricket. And this is what led to it, and how it came about.

Mrs. Peerybingle, going out into the raw twilight, and clicking over the wet stones in a pair of pattens⁵ that worked innumerable rough impressions of the first proposition⁶ in Euclid⁷ all about the yard—Mrs. Peerybingle filled the Kettle at the water-butt.⁸ Presently returning, less the pattens: and a good deal less, for they were tall and Mrs. Peerybingle was but short: she set the Kettle on the fire. In doing which she lost her temper, or mislaid it for an instant; for, the water—being uncomfortably cold, and in that slippery, slushy, sleety sort of state wherein it seems to penetrate through every kind of substance, patten rings⁹ included—had laid hold of Mrs. Peerybingle's toes, and even splashed her legs. And when we rather plume ourselves (with reason too) upon our legs, and keep ourselves particularly neat in point of stockings, we find this, for the moment, hard to bear.

Besides, the Kettle was aggravating and obstinate. It wouldn't allow itself to be adjusted on the top bar; it wouldn't hear of accommodating itself kindly to the knobs of coal; it would lean forward with a drunken air, and dribble, a very Idiot of a Kettle, on the hearth. It was quarrelsome; and hissed and sputtered morosely at the fire. To sum up all, the lid, resisting Mrs. Peerybingle's fingers, first of all turned topsyturvy, and then, with an ingenious pertinacity deserving of a better cause, dived sideways in—down to the

very bottom of the Kettle. And the hull of the Royal George¹⁰ has never made half the monstrous resistance to coming out of the water, which the lid of that Kettle employed against Mrs. Peerybingle, before she got it up again.

It looked sullen and pig-headed enough, even then; carrying its handle with an air of defiance, and cocking its spout pertly and mockingly at Mrs. Peerybingle, as if it said, "I won't boil. Nothing shall induce me!"

But Mrs. Peerybingle, with restored good humor, dusted her chubby little hands against each other, and sat down before the Kettle: laughing. Meantime, the jolly blaze uprose and fell, flashing and gleaming on the little Haymaker at the top of the Dutch clock, until one might have thought he stood stock still before the Moorish Palace, and nothing was in motion but the flame.

He was on the move, however; and had his spasms, two to the second, all right and regular. But his sufferings when the clock was going to strike, were frightful to behold; and when a Cuckoo looked out of a trap-door in the Palace, and gave note six times, it shook him, each time, like a spectral voice—or like a something wiry, plucking at his legs.

It was not until a violent commotion and a whirring noise among the weights and ropes below him had quite subsided, that this terrified Haymaker became himself again. Nor was he startled without reason; for these rattling, bony skeletons of clocks are very disconcerting in their operation, and I wonder very much how any set of men, but most of all how Dutchmen, can have had a liking to invent them. For there is a popular belief that Dutchmen love broad cases¹¹

and much clothing for their own lower selves; and they might know better than to leave their clocks so very lank and unprotected, surely.

Now it was, you observe, that the Kettle began to spend the evening. Now it was, that the Kettle, growing mellow and musical, began to have irrepressible gurglings in its throat, and to indulge in short vocal snorts, which it checked in the bud, as if it hadn't quite made up its mind yet, to be good company. Now it was, that after two or three such vain attempts to stifle its convivial sentiments, it threw off all moroseness, all reserve, and burst into a stream of song so cosy and hilarious, as never maudlin nightingale¹² yet formed the least idea of.

So plain, too! Bless you, you might have understood it like a book—better than some books you and I could name, perhaps. With its warm breath gushing forth in a light cloud which merrily and gracefully ascended a few feet, then hung about the chimney-corner as its own domestic Heaven, it trolled its song with that strong energy of cheerfulness, that its iron body hummed and stirred upon the fire; and the lid itself, the recently rebellious lid—such is the influence of a bright example—performed a sort of jig, and clattered like a deaf and dumb young cymbal that had never known the use of its twin brother.

That this song of the Kettle was a song of invitation and welcome to somebody out of doors; to somebody at that moment coming on, towards the snug small home and the crisp fire; there is no doubt whatever. Mrs. Peerybingle knew it perfectly, as she sat musing, before the hearth. It's a dark night, sang the Kettle, and the rotten leaves are lying by the way; and above, all is mist and darkness, and below, all is mire and

clay; and there's only one relief in all the sad and murky air; and I don't know that it is one, for it's nothing but a glare, of deep and angry crimson, where the sun and wind together set a brand upon the clouds for being guilty of such weather; and the widest open country is a long dull streak of black; and there's hoar-frost on the finger-post, and thaw upon the track; and the ice it isn't water, and the water isn't free; and you couldn't say that anything is what is ought to be; but he's coming, coming, coming!—

And here, if you like, the Cricket *DID* chime in! with a Chirrup, Chirrup, Chirrup of such magnitude, by way of chorus; with a voice so astoundingly disproportionate to its size, as compared with the Kettle; (size! you couldn't see it!) that if it had then and there burst itself like an overcharged gun: if it had fallen a victim on the spot, and chirruped its little body into fifty pieces: it would have seemed a natural and inevitable consequence, for which it had expressly laboured.

The Kettle had had the last of its solo performance. It persevered with undiminished ardor; but the Cricket took first fiddle and kept it. Good Heaven, how it chirped! Its shrill, sharp, piercing voice resounded through the house, and seemed to twinkle in the outer darkness like a star. There was an indescribable little trill and tremble in it, at its loudest, which suggested its being carried off its legs, and made to leap again, by its own intense enthusiasm. Yet they went very well together, the Cricket and the Kettle. The burden¹³ of the song was still the same; and louder, louder, louder still, they sang it in their emulation.

The fair little listener—for fair she was, and

young: though something of what is called the dumping shape; but I don't myself object to that—lighted a candle; glanced at the Haymaker on the top of the clock, who was getting in a pretty average crop of minutes; and looked out of the window, where she saw nothing, owing to the darkness, but her own face imaged in the glass. And my opinion is (and so would yours have been), that she might have looked a long way, and seen nothing half so agreeable. When she came back, and sat down in her former seat, the Cricket and the Kettle were still keeping it up, with a perfect fury of competition. The Kettle's weak side clearly being that he didn't know when he was beat.

There was all the excitement of a race about it. Chirp, chirp, chirp! Cricket a mile ahead. Hum, hum, hum—m—m! Kettle making play in the distance, like a great top. Chirp, chirp, chirp! Cricket round the corner. Hum, hum, hum—m—m! Kettle sticking to him in his own way; no idea of giving in. Chirp, chirp, chirp! Cricket fresher than ever. Hum, hum, hum—m—m! Kettle slow and steady. Chirp, chirp, chirp! Cricket going in to finish him. Hum, hum, hum—m—m! Kettle not to be finished. Until at last, they got so jumbled together, in the hurry-scurry, helter-skelter, of the match, that whether the Kettle chirped and the Cricket hummed, or the Cricket chirped and the Kettle hummed, or they both chirped and both hummed, it would have taken a clearer head than yours or mine to have decided with anything like certainty. But of this there is no doubt: that the Kettle and the Cricket, at one and the same moment, and by some power of amalgamation best known to themselves, sent, each, his fireside song of

comfort streaming into a ray of the candle that shone out through the window; and a long way down the lane. And this light, bursting on a certain person who, on the instant, approached towards it through the gloom, expressed the whole thing to him, literally in a twinkling, and cried, "Welcome home, old fellow! Welcome home, my Boy!"

This end attained, the Kettle, being dead beat, boiled over, and was taken off the fire. Mrs. Peerybingle then went running to the door, where, what with the wheels of a cart, the tramp of a horse, the voice of a man, the tearing in and out of an excited dog, and the surprising and mysterious appearance of a baby, there was soon the very What's-his-name to pay.

Where the baby came from, or how Mrs. Peerybingle got hold of it in that flash of time, *I* don't know. But a live baby there was, in Mrs. Peerybingle's arms; and a pretty tolerable amount of pride she seemed to have in it, when she was drawn gently to the fire, by a sturdy figure of a man, much taller and much older than herself; who had to stoop a long way down, to kiss her. But she was worth the trouble. Six foot six, with the lumbago,¹⁴ might have done it.

"Oh goodness, John!" said Mrs. P. "What a state you're in with the weather!"

He was something the worse for it, undeniably. The thick mist hung in clots upon his eyelashes like candied thaw; and between the fog and fire together, there were rainbows in his very whiskers.

"Why, you see, Dot," John made answer, slowly, as he unrolled a shawl from about his throat; and warmed his hands; "it—it an't exactly summer weather. So, no wonder."

"I wish you wouldn't call me Dot, John. I don't like it," said Mrs. Peerybingle: pouting in a way that clearly showed she *did* like it, very much.

"Why, what else are you?" returned John, looking down upon her with a smile, and giving her waist as light a squeeze as his huge hand and arm could give. "A dot and"—here he glanced at the baby—"a dot and carry—I won't say it, for fear I should spoil it; but I was very near a joke. I don't know as ever I was nearer."

He was often near to something or other very clever, by his own account: this lumbering, slow, honest John; this John so heavy, but so light of spirit; so rough upon the surface, but so gentle at the core; so dull without, so quick within, so stolid, but so good! Oh Mother Nature, give thy children the true poetry of heart that hid itself in this poor Carrier's¹⁵ breast—he was but a Carrier by the way—and we can bear to have them talking prose, and leading lives of prose; and bear to bless thee for their company!

It was pleasant to see Dot, with her little figure and her baby in her arms: a very doll of a baby: glancing with a coquettish thoughtfulness at the fire, and inclining her delicate little head just enough on one side to let it rest in an odd, half-natural, half-affected, wholly nestling and agreeable manner, on the great rugged figure of the Carrier. It was pleasant to see him, with his tender awkwardness, endeavoring to adapt his rude support to her slight need, and make his burly middle-age a leaning-staff not inappropriate to her blooming youth. It was pleasant to observe how Tilly Slowboy, waiting in the background for the baby, took special cognizance (though in her earliest teens) of this grouping; and stood with her

mouth and eyes wide open, and her head thrust forward, taking it in as if it were air. Nor was it less agreeable to observe how John the Carrier, reference being made by Dot to the aforesaid baby, checked his hand when on the point of touching the infant, as if he thought he might crack it; and bending down, surveyed it from a safe distance, with a kind of puzzled pride: such as an amiable mastiff¹⁶ might be supposed to show, if he found himself, one day, the father of a young canary.

"An't he beautiful, John? Don't he look precious in his sleep?"

"Very precious," said John. "Very much so. He generally *is* asleep, an't he?"

"Lor, John! Good gracious, no!"

"Oh," said John, pondering. "I thought his eyes was generally shut. Halloa!"

"Goodness, John, how you startle one!"

"It an't right for him to turn 'em up in that way!" said the astonished Carrier, "is it? See how he's winking with both of 'em at once! And look at his mouth! why, he's gasping like a gold and silver fish!"

"You don't deserve to be a father, you don't," said Dot, with all the dignity of an experienced matron.¹⁷ "But how should you know what little complaints children are troubled with, John! You wouldn't so much as know their names, you stupid fellow." And when she had turned the baby over on her left arm and had slapped its back as a restorative, she pinched her husband's ear, laughing.

"No," said John, pulling off his outer coat. "It's very true, Dot. I don't know much about it. I only know that I've been fighting pretty stiffly with the

wind to-night. It's been blowing north-east, straight into the cart, the whole way home."

"Poor old man, so it has!" cried Mrs. Peerybingle, instantly becoming very active. "Here! Take the precious darling, Tilly, while I make myself of some use. Bless it, I could smother it with kissing it, I could! Hie then, good dog! Hie Boxer, boy! Only let me make the tea first, John; and then I'll help you with the parcels, like a busy bee. 'How doth the little'¹⁸—and all the rest of it, you know, John. Did you ever learn 'how doth the little,' when you went to school, John?"

"Not to quite know it," John returned. "I was very near it once. But I should only have spoilt it, I dare say."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Dot. She had the blithest little laugh you ever heard. "What a dear old darling of a dunce you are, John, to be sure!"

Not at all disputing this position, John went out to see that the boy with the lantern, which had been dancing to and fro before the door and window, like a Will of the Wisp,¹⁹ took due care of the horse; who was fatter than you would quite believe, if I gave you his measure, and so old that his birthday was lost in the mists of antiquity. Boxer, feeling that his attentions were due to the family in general, and must be impartially distributed, dashed in and out with bewildering inconstancy; now describing a circle of short barks round the horse, where he was being rubbed down at the stable-door; now feigning to make savage rushes at his mistress, and facetiously bringing himself to sudden stops; now eliciting a shriek from Tilly Slowboy, in the low nursing-chair near the fire, by the unexpected application of his

moist nose to her countenance; now exhibiting an obtrusive interest in the baby; now going round and round upon the hearth, and lying down as if he had established himself for the night; now getting up again, and taking that nothing of a fag-end of a tail of his, out into the weather, as if he had just remembered an appointment, and was off, at a round trot, to keep it.

“There! There’s the teapot, ready on the hob²⁰!” said Dot; as briskly busy as a child at play at keeping house. “And there’s the cold knuckle of ham; and there’s the butter; and there’s the crusty loaf, and all! Here’s the clothes-basket for the small parcels, John, if you’ve got any there—where are you, John? Don’t let the dear child fall under the grate, Tilly, whatever you do!”

It may be noted of Miss Slowboy, in spite of her rejecting the caution with some vivacity, that she had a rare and surprising talent for getting this baby into difficulties: and had several times imperilled its short life, in a quiet way peculiarly her own. She was of a spare and straight shape, this young lady, insomuch that her garments appeared to be in constant danger of sliding off those sharp pegs, her shoulders, on which they were loosely hung. Her costume was remarkable for the partial development, on all possible occasions, of some flannel vestment of a singular structure; also for affording glimpses, in the region of the back, of a corset, or pair of stays, in color a dead-green. Being always in a state of gaping admiration at everything, and absorbed, besides, in the perpetual contemplation of her mistress’s perfections and the baby’s, Miss Slowboy, in her little errors of judgment, may be said to have done equal

honor to her head and to her heart; and though these did less honor to the baby's head, which they were the occasional means of bringing into contact with deal²¹ doors, dressers, stair-rails, bedposts, and other foreign substances, still they were the honest results of Tilly Slowboy's constant astonishment at finding herself so kindly treated, and installed in such a comfortable home. For, the maternal and paternal Slowboy were alike unknown to fame, and Tilly had been bred by public charity, a foundling; which word, though only differing from fondling by one vowel's length, is very different in meaning, and expresses quite another thing.

To have seen little Mrs. Peerybingle come back with her husband; tugging at the clothes-basket, and making the most strenuous exertions to do nothing at all (for he carried it); would have amused you, almost as much as it amused him. It may have entertained the Cricket too, for anything I know; but certainly, it now began to chirp again, vehemently.

"Heyday!" said John, in his slow way. "It's merrier than ever, to-night, I think."

"And it's sure to bring us good fortune, John! It always has done so. To have a Cricket on the hearth, is the luckiest thing in all the world!"

John looked at her as if he had very nearly got the thought into his head, that she was his Cricket in chief, and he quite agreed with her. But it was probably one of his narrow escapes, for he said nothing.

"The first time I heard its cheerful little note, John, was on that night when you brought me home—when you brought me to my new home here; its little mistress. Nearly a year ago. You recollect, John?"

Oh yes. John remembered. I should think so!

"Its chirp was such a welcome to me! It seemed so full of promise and encouragement. It seemed to say you would be kind and gentle with me, and would not expect (I had a fear of that, John, then) to find an old head on the shoulders of your foolish little wife."

John thoughtfully patted one of the shoulders, and then the head, as though he would have said No, no; he had had no such expectation; he had been quite content to take them as they were. And really he had reason. They were very comely.²²

"It spoke the truth, John, when it seemed to say so; for you have ever been, I am sure, the best, the most considerate, the most affectionate of husbands to me. This has been a happy home, John; and I love the Cricket for its sake!"

"Why, so do I, then," said the Carrier. "So do I, Dot."

"I love it for the many times I have heard it, and the many thoughts its harmless music has given me. Sometimes, in the twilight, when I felt a little solitary and down-hearted, John—before baby was here to keep me company and make the house gay—when I have thought how lonely you would be if I should die; how lonely I should be if I could know that you had lost me, dear; its Chirp, Chirp, Chirp upon the hearth, has seemed to tell me of another little voice, so sweet, so very dear to me, before whose coming sound my trouble vanished like a dream. And when I used to fear—I did fear once, John; I was very young you know—that ours might prove to be an ill-assorted marriage: I being such a child, and you more like my guardian than my husband: and that you might not, however hard you tried, be able to learn to love me, as you hoped and prayed you might;

its Chirp, Chirp, Chirp has cheered me up again, and filled me with new trust and confidence. I was thinking of these things to-night, dear when I sat expecting you; and I love the Cricket for their sake!"

"And so do I," repeated John. "But, Dot? I hope and pray that I might learn to love you? How you talk! I had learnt that, long before I brought you here, to be the Cricket's little mistress, Dot!"

She laid her hand, an instant, on his arm, and looked up at him with an agitated face, as if she would have told him something. Next moment she was down upon her knees before the basket; speaking in a sprightly voice, and busy with the parcels.

"There are not many of them to-night, John, but I saw some goods behind the cart, just now; and though they give more trouble, perhaps, still they pay as well; so we have no reason to grumble, have we? Besides, you have been delivering, I dare say, as you came along?"

"Oh yes," John said. "A good many."

"Why, what's this round box? Heart alive, John, it's a wedding-cake!"

"Leave a woman alone to find out that," said John, admiringly. "Now a man would never have thought of it! Whereas, it's my belief that if you was to pack a wedding-cake up in a tea-chest, or a turn-up bedstead, or a pickled salmon keg, or any unlikely thing, a woman would be sure to find it out directly. Yes; I called for it at the pastry-cook's."

"And it weighs I don't know what—whole hundred weights!" cried Dot, making a great demonstration of trying to lift it. "Whose is it, John? Where is it going?"

"Read the writing on the other side," said John.

"Why, John! My Goodness, John!"

"Ah! who'd have thought it!" John returned.

"You never mean to say," pursued Dot, sitting on the floor and shaking her head at him, "that it's Gruff and Tackleton the toymaker!"

John nodded.

Mrs. Peerybingle nodded also, fifty times at least. Not in assent—in dumb and pitying amazement; screwing up her lips the while, with all their little force (they were never made for screwing up; I am clear of that), and looking the good Carrier through and through, in her abstraction. Miss Slowboy, in the meantime, who had a mechanical power of reproducing scraps of current conversation for the delectation of the baby, with all the sense struck out of them, and all the nouns changed into the plural number, inquired aloud of that young creature, Was it Gruffs and Tackletons the toymakers then, and Would it call at pastry-cooks for wedding-cakes, and Did its mothers know the boxes when its fathers brought them homes; and so on.

"And that is really to come about!" said Dot.

"Why, she and I were girls at school together, John."

He might have been thinking of her: or nearly thinking of her, perhaps: as she was in that same school time. He looked upon her with a thoughtful pleasure, but he made no answer.

"And he's as old! As unlike her!—Why, how many years older than you, is Gruff and Tackleton, John?"

"How many more cups of tea shall I drink to-night at one sitting, than Gruff and Tackleton ever took in four, I wonder!" replied John, good-humouredly, as he drew a chair to the round table, and began at the

cold ham. "As to eating, I eat but little; but that little I enjoy, Dot."

Even this; his usual sentiment at meal times, one of his innocent delusions (for his appetite was always obstinate, and flatly contradicted him); awoke no smile in the face of his little wife, who stood among the parcels, pushing the cake-box slowly from her with her foot, and never once looked, though her eyes were cast down too, upon the dainty shoe she generally was so mindful of. Absorbed in thought, she stood there, heedless alike of the tea and John (although he called to her, and rapped the table with his knife to startle her), until he rose and touched her on the arm; when she looked at him for a moment, and hurried to her place behind the teaboard, laughing at her negligence. But not as she had laughed before. The manner and the music were quite changed.

The Cricket, too, had stopped. Somehow the room was not so cheerful as it had been. Nothing like it.

"So these are all the parcels, are they, John?" she said breaking a long silence, which the honest Carrier had devoted to the practical illustration of one part of his favorite sentiment—certainly enjoying what he ate, if it couldn't be admitted that he ate but little.

"So these are all the parcels; are they, John?"

"That's all," said John. "Why—no—I" laying down his knife and fork, and taking a long breath. "I declare—I've clean forgotten the old gentleman!"

"The old gentleman?"

"In the cart," said John. "He was asleep, among the straw, the last time I saw him. I've very nearly remembered him, twice, since I came in; but he went out of my head again. Holloa! Yahip there! Rouse up! That's my hearty!"

John said these latter words outside the door, whither he had hurried with the candle in his hand.

Miss Slowboy, conscious of some mysterious reference to *The Old Gentleman*,²³ and connecting in her mystified imagination certain associations of a religious nature with the phrase, was so disturbed, that hastily rising from the low chair by the fire to seek protection near the skirts of her mistress, and coming into contact as she crossed the doorway with an ancient stranger, as she instinctively made a charge or butt at him with the only offensive instrument within her reach. This instrument happening to be the baby, great commotion and alarm ensued, which the sagacity of Boxer rather tended to increase; for that good dog, more thoughtful than its master, had, it seemed, been watching the old gentleman in his sleep lest he should walk off with a few young poplar trees that were tied up behind the cart; and he still attended on him very closely; worrying his gaiters in fact, and making dead sets at the buttons.

"You're such an undeniable good sleeper, Sir," said John, when tranquillity was restored; in the meantime the old gentleman had stood, bareheaded and motionless, in the centre of the room; "that I have half a mind to ask you where the other six²⁴ are: only that would be a joke, and I know I should spoil it. Very near though," murmured the Carrier, with a chuckle; "very near!"

The stranger, who had long white hair; good features, singularly bold and well defined for an old man; and dark, bright, penetrating eyes; looked round with a smile, and saluted the Carrier's wife by gravely inclining his head.

His garb was very quaint and odd—a long, long

way behind the time. Its hue was brown, all over. In his hand he held a great brown club or walking-stick; and striking this upon the floor, it fell asunder, and became a chair. On which he sat down, quite composedly.

"There!" said the Carrier, turning to his wife. "That's the way I found him, sitting by the roadside! Upright as a milestone. And almost as deaf."

"Sitting in the open air, John!"

"In the open air," replied the Carrier, "just at dusk. 'Carriage Paid,' he said; and gave me eighteenpence. Then he got in. And there he is."

"He's going, John, I think!"

Not at all. He was only going to speak.

"If you please, I was to be left till called for," said the stranger, mildly. "Don't mind me."

With that he took a pair of spectacles from one of his large pockets, and a book from another, and leisurely began to read. Making no more of Boxer than if he had been a house lamb!

The Carrier and his wife exchanged a look of perplexity. The stranger raised his head; and glancing from the latter to the former, said:

"Your daughter, my good friend?"

"Wife," returned John.

"Niece?" said the Stranger.

"Wife," roared John.

"Indeed?" observed the Stranger. "Surely? Very young."

He quietly turned over and resumed his reading. But before he could have read two lines, he again interrupted himself to say:

"Baby, yours?"

John gave him a gigantic nod; equivalent to an

answer in the affirmative, delivered through a speaking-trumpet.

"Girl?"

"B-o-o-oy!" roared John.

"Also very young, eh?"

Mrs. Peerybingle instantly struck in. "Two months and three da-ays! Vaccinated just six weeks ago-o! Took very finely! Considered, by the doctor, a remarkably beautiful chi-ild! Equal to the general run of children at five months o-old! Takes notice, in a way quite wonder-ful! May seem impossible to you, but feels his legs al-ready!"

Here the breathless little mother, who had been shrieking these short sentences into the old man's ear, until her pretty face was crimsoned, held up the baby before him as a stubborn and triumphant fact; while Tilly Slowboy, with a melodious cry of "Ketcher, Ketcher"—which sounded like some unknown words, adapted to a popular sneeze—performed some cow-like gambols round that all-unconscious innocent.

"Hark! He's called for, sure enough," said John. "There's somebody at the door. Open it, Tilly."

Before she could reach it, however, it was opened from without; being a primitive sort of door, with a latch, that any one could lift if he chose—and a good many people did choose, I can tell you; for all kinds of neighbors liked to have a cheerful word or two with the Carrier, though he was no great talker himself. Being opened, it gave admission to a little meagre, thoughtful dingy-faced man, who seemed to have made himself a great-coat from the sack-cloth²⁵ covering of some old box; for when he turned to shut the door, and keep the weather out, he disclosed upon the back of that garment, the inscription G & T

in large black capitals. Also the word GLASS in bold characters.

"Good evening, John!" said the little man. "Good evening, Mum. Good evening, Tilly. Good evening, Unbeknown! How's baby, Mum? Boxer's pretty well, I hope?"

"All thriving, Caleb," replied Dot. "I am sure you need only to look at the dear child, for one, to know that."

"And I'm sure I need only look at you for another," said Caleb.

He didn't look at her though; he had a wandering and thoughtful eye which seemed to be always projecting itself into some other time and place, no matter what he said; a description which will equally apply to his voice.

"Or at John for another," said Caleb. "Or at Tilly, as far as that goes. Or certainly at Boxer."

"Busy just now, Caleb?" asked the Carrier.

"Why, pretty well, John," he returned, with the distraught air of a man who was casting about for the Philosopher's stone,²⁶ at least. "Pretty much so. There's rather a run on Noah's Arks at present. I could have wished to improve upon the Family, but I don't see how it's to be done at the price. It would be a satisfaction to one's mind, to make it clearer which was Shems²⁷ and Hams, and which was wives. Flies an't on that scale neither, as compared with elephants you know! Ah! well! Have you got anything in the parcel line for me, John?"

The Carrier put his hand into a pocket of the coat he had taken off; and brought out, carefully preserved in moss and paper, a tiny flower-pot.

"There it is!" he said, adjusting it with great care. "Not so much as a leaf damaged. Full of buds!"

Caleb's dull eye brightened, as he took it, and thanked him.

"Dear, Caleb," said the Carrier. "Very dear at this season."

"Never mind that. It would be cheap to me, whatever it cost," returned the little man. "Anything else, John?"

"A small box," replied the Carrier. "Here you are!"

"'For Caleb Plummer,'" said the little man, spelling out the direction. "'With Cash.' With Cash, John. I don't think it's for me."

"With Care," returned the Carrier, looking over his shoulder. "Where do you make out cash?"

"Oh! To be sure!" said Caleb. "It's all right. With care! Yes, yes; that's mine. It might have been with cash, indeed, if my dear boy in the golden South Americas²⁸ had lived, John. You loved him like a son; didn't you? You needn't say you did. I know, of course. 'Caleb Plummer. With care.' Yes, yes, it's all right. It's a box of dolls' eyes for my daughter's work. I wish it was her own sight in a box, John."

"I wish it was, or could be!" cried the Carrier.

"Thank'ee," said the little man. "You speak very hearty. To think that she should never see the dolls—and them a-staring at her, so bold, all day long! That's where it cuts. What's the damage,²⁹ John?"

"I'll damage you," said John, "if you inquire. Dot! Very near?"

"Well! it's like you to say so," observed the little

man. "It's your kind way. Let me see. I think that's all."

"I think not," said the Carrier. "Try again."

"Something for our Governor,³⁰ eh?" said Caleb, after pondering a little while. "To be sure. That's what I came for; but my head's so running on them Arks and things! He hasn't been here, has he?"

"Not he," returned the Carrier. "He's too busy, courting."

"He's coming round though," said Caleb; "for he told me to keep on the near side of the road going home, and it was ten to one he'd take me up. I had better go, by the bye.—You couldn't have the goodness to let me pinch Boxer's tail, Mum, for half a moment, could you?"

"Why, Caleb! what a question!"

"Oh, never mind, Mum," said the little man. "He mightn't like it perhaps. There's a small order just come in, for barking dogs; and I should wish to go as close to natur' as I could, for sixpence. That's all. Never mind, Mum."

It happened opportunely, that Boxer, without receiving the proposed stimulus, began to bark with great zeal. But as this implied the approach of some new visitor, Caleb, postponing his study from the life to a more convenient season, shouldered the round box, and took a hurried leave. He might have spared himself the trouble, for he met the visitor upon the threshold.

"Oh! You are here, are you? Wait a bit. I'll take you home. John Peerybingle, my service to you. More of my service to your pretty wife. Handsomer every day! Better too, if possible! And younger,"

mused the speaker, in a low voice; "that's the Devil of it!"

"I should be astonished at your paying compliments, Mr. Tackleton," said Dot, not with the best grace in the world; "but for your condition."

"You know all about it then?"

"I have got myself to believe it, somehow," said Dot.

"After a hard struggle, I suppose?"

"Very."

Tackleton the toy-merchant, pretty generally known as Gruff and Tackleton—for that was the firm, though Gruff had been bought out long ago; only leaving his name, and as some said his nature, according to its dictionary meaning in the business—Tackleton the toy-merchant, was a man whose vocation had been quite misunderstood by his parents and guardians. If they had made him a money lender, or a sharp attorney, or a sheriff's officer, or a broker, he might have sown his discontented oats³¹ in his youth, and, after having had the full run of himself in ill-natured transactions, might have turned out amiable, at last, for the sake of a little freshness and novelty. But, cramped and chafing in the peaceable pursuit of toy-making, he was a domestic ogre,³² who had been living on children all his life, and was their implacable enemy. He despised all toys; wouldn't have bought one for the world; delighted, in his malice, to insinuate grim expressions into the faces of brown-paper farmers who drove pigs to market, bell-men who advertised lost lawyers' consciences, movable old ladies who darned stockings or carved pies; and other like samples of his stock in trade. In appalling masks; hideous hairy, red-eyed Jacks in Boxes; Vampire³³

Kites; demoniacal Tumblers who wouldn't lie down, and were perpetually flying forward, to stare infants out of countenance; his soul perfectly revelled. They were his only relief, and safety-valve. He was great in such inventions. Anything suggestive of a pony-nightmare, was delicious to him. He had even lost money (and he took to that toy very kindly) by getting up Goblin³⁴ slides for magic-lanterns,³⁵ whereon the powers of darkness were depicted as a sort of supernatural shell-fish, with human faces. In intensifying the portraiture of giants, he had sunk quite a little capital; and, though no painter himself, he could indicate, for the instruction of his artists, with a piece of chalk, a certain furtive leer for the countenances of those monsters, which was safe to destroy the peace of mind of any young gentleman between the ages of six and eleven, for the whole Christmas or midsummer vacation.

What he was in toys, he was (as most men are) in all other things. You may easily suppose, therefore, that within the green cape, which reached down to the calves of his legs, there was buttoned up to the chin an uncommonly pleasant fellow; and that he was about as choice a spirit, and as agreeable a companion, as ever stood in a pair of bull-headed looking boots with mahogany-colored tops.

Still, Tackleton, the Toy-merchant, was going to be married. In spite of all this, he was going to be married. And to a young wife too; a beautiful young wife.

He didn't look much like a bridegroom, as he stood in the Carrier's kitchen, with a twist in his dry face, and a screw in his body, and his hat jerked over the bridge of his nose, and his hands tucked down into the

bottoms of his pockets, and his whole sarcastic ill-conditioned self peering out of one little corner of one little eye, like the concentrated essence of any number of ravens.³⁶ But, a bridegroom he designed to be.

"In three days' time. Next Thursday. The last day of the first month in the year. That's my wedding-day," said Tackleton.

Did I mention that he had always one eye wide open, and one eye nearly shut; and that the one eye nearly shut, was always the expressive eye? I don't think I did.

"That's my wedding-day!" said Tackleton, rattling his money.

"Why, it's our wedding-day too," exclaimed the Carrier.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Tackleton. "Odd! You're just such another couple. Just!"

The indignation of Dot at this presumptuous assertion is not to be described. What next? His imagination would compass the possibility of just such another baby, perhaps. The man was mad.

"I say! a word with you," murmured Tackleton, nudging the Carrier with his elbow, and taking him a little apart. "You'll come to the wedding? We're in the same boat, you know."

"How in the same boat?" inquired the Carrier.

"A little disparity, you know;" said Tackleton, with another nudge. "Come and spend an evening with us, beforehand."

"Why?" demanded John, astonished at this pressing hospitality.

"Why?" returned the other. "That's a new way of receiving an invitation. Why, for pleasure; sociability, you know, and all that!"

"I thought you were never sociable," said John, in his plain way.

"Tchah! It's of no use to be anything but free with you I see," said Tackleton. "Why, then, the truth is you have a—what tea-drinking people call a sort of a comfortable appearance together: you and your wife. We know better, you know, but——"

"No, we don't know better," interposed John. "What are you talking about?"

"Well! We *don't* know better, then," said Tackleton. "We'll agree that we don't. As you like; what does it matter? I was going to say, as you have that sort of appearance, your company will produce a favorable effect on Mrs. Tackleton that will be. And, though I don't think your good lady's very friendly to me, in this matter, still she can't help herself from falling into my views, for there's a compactness and cosiness of appearance about her that always tells, even in an indifferent case. You'll say you'll come?"

"We have arranged to keep our wedding-day (as far as that goes) at home," said John. "We have made the promise to ourselves these six months. We think, you see, that home——"

"Bah! what's home?" cried Tackleton. "Four walls and a ceiling! (why don't you kill that Cricket; I would! I always do. I hate their noise.) There are four walls and a ceiling at my house. Come to me!"

"You kill your Crickets, eh?" said John.

"Scrunch 'em, Sir," returned the other, setting his heel heavily on the floor. "You'll say you'll come? It's as much your interest as mine, you know, that the women should persuade each other that they're quiet and contented, and couldn't be better off. I know

their way. Whatever one woman says, another woman is determined to clinch,³⁷ always. There's that spirit of emulation among 'em, Sir, that if your wife says to my wife, 'I'm the happiest woman in the world, and mine's the best husband in the world, and I dote on him,' my wife will say the same to yours, or more, and half believe it."

"Do you mean to say she don't, then?" asked the Carrier.

"Don't!" cried Tackleton, with a short, sharp laugh. "Don't what?"

The Carrier had had some faint idea of adding, "dote upon you." But happening to meet the half-closed eye, as it twinkled upon him over the turned-up collar of his cape, which was within an ace of poking it out, he felt it such an unlikely part and parcel of anything to be doted on, that he substituted, "that she don't believe it?"

"Ah, you dog! You're joking," said Tackleton.

But the Carrier, though slow to understand the full drift of his meaning, eyed him in such a serious manner that he was obliged to be a little more explanatory.

"I have the humor,³⁸" said Tackleton: holding up the fingers of his left hand, and tapping the forefinger, to imply 'there I am, Tackleton to wit:' "I have the humor, Sir, to marry a young wife and a pretty wife:" here he rapped his little finger, to express the bride; not sparingly, but sharply; with a sense of power. "I'm able to gratify that humor and I do. It's my whim. But—now look there."

He pointed to where Dot was sitting, thoughtfully, before the fire; leaning her dimpled chin upon her hand, and watching the bright blaze. The Carrier

looked at her, and then at him, and then at her, and then at him again.

"She honors and obeys,³⁹ no doubt, you know," said Tackleton; "and that, as I am not a man of sentiment, is quite enough for *me*. But do you think there's anything more in it?"

"I think," observed the Carrier, "that I should chuck any man out of window, who said there wasn't."

"Exactly so," returned the other with an unusual alacrity of assent. "To be sure! Doubtless you would. Of course. I'm certain of it. Good night. Pleasant dreams!"

The good Carrier was puzzled, and made uncomfortable and uncertain, in spite of himself. He couldn't help showing it, in his manner.

"Good night, my dear friend!" said Tackleton, compassionately. "I'm off. We're exactly alike, in reality, I see. You won't give us to-morrow evening? Well! Next day you go out visiting, I know. I'll meet you there, and bring my wife that is to be. It'll do her good. You're agreeable? Thank'ee. What's that!"

It was a loud cry from the Carrier's wife; a loud, sharp, sudden cry, that made the room ring, like a glass vessel. She had risen from her seat, and stood like one transfixed by terror and surprise. The stranger had advanced towards the fire to warm himself, and stood within a short stride of her chair. But quite still.

"Dot!" cried the Carrier. "Mary! Darling! What's the matter?"

They were all about her in a moment. Caleb, who had been dozing on the cake-box, in the first imperfect recovery of his suspended presence of mind seized

Miss Slowboy by the hair of her head, but immediately apologized.

"Mary!" exclaimed the Carrier, supporting her in his arms. "Are you ill! What is it? Tell me dear!"

She only answered by beating her hands together, and falling into a wild fit of laughter. Then, sinking from his grasp upon the ground, she covered her face with her apron, and wept bitterly. And then she laughed again, and then she cried again; and then, she said how cold it was, and suffered him to lead her to the fire, where she sat down as before. The old man standing, as before; quite still.

"I'm better, John," she said. "I'm quite well now—I—"

"John!" But John was on the other side of her. Why turn her face towards the strange old gentleman, as if addressing him! Was her brain wandering?

"Only a fancy, John dear—a kind of shock—a something coming suddenly before my eyes—I don't know what it was. It's quite gone; quite gone."

"I'm glad it's gone," muttered Tackleton, turning the expressive eye all round the room. "I wonder where it's gone, and what it was. Humph! Caleb, come here! Who's that with the grey hair?"

"I don't know, Sir," returned Caleb in a whisper. "Never see him before, in all my life. A beautiful figure for a nut-cracker; quite a new model. With a screw-jaw opening down into his waistcoat, he'd be lovely."

"Not ugly enough," said Tackleton.

"Or for a firebox,⁴⁰ either," observed Caleb, in deep contemplation, "what a model! Unscrew his head to put the matches in; turn him heels up'ards for the

light; and what a firebox for a gentleman's mantel-shelf just as he stands!"

"Not half ugly enough," said Tackleton. "Nothing in him at all. Come! Bring that box! All right now, I hope?"

"Oh, quite gone! Quite gone!" said the little woman, waving him hurriedly away. "Good night!"

"Good night," said Tackleton. "Good night, John Peerybingle! Take care how you carry that box, Caleb. Let it fall, and I'll murder you! Dark as pitch, and weather worse than ever, eh? Good night!"

So, with another sharp look round the room, he went out at the door; followed by Caleb with the wedding-cake on his head.

The Carrier had been so much astounded by his little wife, and so busily engaged in soothing and tending her, that he had scarcely been conscious of the stranger's presence, until now, when he again stood there, their only guest.

"He don't belong to them, you see," said John. "I must give him a hint to go."

"I beg your pardon, friend," said the old gentleman, advancing to him; "the more so, as I fear your wife has not been well; but the attendant whom my infirmity," he touched his ears and shook his head, "renders almost indispensable, not having arrived, I fear there must be some mistake. The bad night which made the shelter of your comfortable cart (may I never have a worse!) so acceptable, is still as bad as ever. Would you, in your kindness, suffer me to rent a bed here?"

"Yes, yes," cried Dot. "Yes! Certainly!"

"Oh!" said the Carrier, surprised by the rapidity

of this consent. "Well! I don't object; but still I'm not quite sure that—"

"Hush!" she interrupted. "Dear John!"

"Why, he's stone deaf," urged John.

"I know he is, but—Yes, Sir, certainly. Yes! certainly! I'll make him up a bed, directly, John."

As she hurried off to do it, the flutter of her spirits, and the agitation of her manner, were so strange, that the Carrier stood looking after her, quite confounded.

"Did its mothers make up a beds then!" cried Miss Slowboy to the baby; "and did its hair grow brown and curly, when its caps was lifted off, and frighten it, a precious pets, a sitting by the fires!"

With that unaccountable attraction of the mind to trifles, which is often incidental to a state of doubt and confusion, the Carrier, as he walked slowly to and fro, found himself mentally repeating even these absurd words, many times. So many times that he got them by heart, and was still conning them over and over, like a lesson, when Tilly, after administering as much friction to the little bald head with her hand as she thought wholesome (according to the practice of nurses), had once more tied the baby's cap on.

"And frightened it a precious pets, a sitting by the fire. What frightened Dot, I wonder!" mused the Carrier, pacing to and fro.

He scouted, from his heart, the insinuations of the toy-merchant, and yet they filled him with a vague, indefinite uneasiness; for Tackleton was quick and sly; and he had that painful sense, himself, of being a man of slow perception, that a broken hint was always worrying to him. He certainly had no intention in his mind of linking anything that Tackleton had said, with the unusual conduct of his wife; but

the two subjects of reflection came into his mind together, and he could not keep them asunder.

The bed was soon made ready; and the visitor, declining all refreshment but a cup of tea, retired. Then Dot: quite well again, she said: quite well again: arranged the great chair in the chimney-corner for her husband; filled his pipe and gave it him; and took her usual little stool beside him on the hearth.

She always *would* sit on that little stool; I think she must have had a kind of notion that it was a coaxing, wheedling, little stool.

She was, out and out, the very best filler of a pipe, I should say, in the four quarters of the globe. To see her put that chubby little finger in the bowl, and then blow down the pipe to clear the tube; and, when she had done so, affect to think that there was really something in the tube, and blow a dozen times, and hold it to her eye like a telescope, with a most provoking twist in her capital little face, as she looked down it; was quite a brilliant thing. As to the tobacco, she was perfect mistress of the subject; and her lighting of the pipe, with a wisp of paper, when the Carrier had it in his mouth—going so very near his nose, and yet not scorching it—was art: high art, Sir.

And the Cricket and the Kettle, tuning up again, acknowledged it! The bright fire, blazing up again, acknowledged it! The little Mower on the clock, in his unheeded work, acknowledged it! The Carrier, in his smoothing forehead and expanding face, acknowledged it, the readiest of all.

And as he soberly and thoughtfully puffed at his old pipe; and as the Dutch clock ticked; and as the red fire gleamed; and as the Cricket chirped; that Genius⁴¹ of his hearth and home (for such the

Cricket was) came out, in fairy shape, into the room, and summoned many forms of home about him. Dots of all ages, and all sizes, filled the chamber. Dots who were merry children, running on before him, gathering flowers, in the fields; coy Dots, half shrinking from, half yielding to, the pleading of his own rough image; newly-married Dots, alighting at the door, and taking wondering possession of the household keys; motherly little Dots, attended by fictitious Slowboys, bearing babies to be christened; matronly Dots, still young and blooming, watching Dots of daughters, as they danced at rustic balls; fat Dots, encircled and beset by troops of rosy grandchildren; withered Dots, who leaned on sticks, and tottered as they crept along. Old Carriers too, appeared, with blind old Boxers lying at their feet; and newer carts with younger drivers ("Peerybingle Brothers" on the tilt⁴²); and sick old Carriers, tended by the gentlest hands; and graves of dead and gone old Carriers, green in the churchyard. And as the Cricket showed him all these things—he saw them plainly, though his eyes were fixed upon the fire—the Carrier's heart grew light and happy, and he thanked his household gods with all his might, and cared no more for Gruff and Tackleton than you do.

But what was that young figure of a man, which the same fairy Cricket set so near her stool, and which remained there, singly and alone? Why did it linger still, so near her, with its arm upon the chimney-piece, ever repeating "Married! and not to me!"

Oh Dot! Oh failing Dot! There is no place for it in all your husband's visions; why has its shadow fallen on his hearth!

CHIRP THE SECOND

CALEB PLUMMER and his blind daughter lived all alone by themselves, as the story-books say—and my blessing, with yours to back it I hope, on the story-books, for saying anything in this workaday world!—Caleb Plummer and his blind daughter lived all alone by themselves, in a little cracked nutshell of a wooden house, which was, in truth, no better than a pimple on the prominent red-brick nose of Gruff and Tackleton. The premises of Gruff and Tackleton were the great feature of the street; but you might have knocked down Caleb Plummer's dwelling with a hammer or two, and carried off the pieces in a cart.

If any one had done the dwelling house of Caleb Plummer the honor to miss it after such an inroad, it would have been, no doubt, to commend its demolition as a vast improvement. It stuck to the premises of Gruff and Tackleton, like a barnacle⁴³ to a ship's keel, or a snail to a door, or a little bunch of toadstools to the stem of a tree. But it was the germ from which the full-grown trunk of Gruff and Tackleton had sprung; and under its crazy roof, the Gruff before last had, in a small way, made toys for a generation of old boys and girls, who had played with them, and found them out, and broken them, and gone to sleep.

I have said that Caleb and his poor blind daughter lived here; I should have said that Caleb lived here, and his poor blind daughter somewhere else; in an

enchanted home of Caleb's furnishing, where scarcity and shabbiness were not, and trouble never entered. Caleb was no sorcerer,⁴⁴ but in the only magic art that still remains to us: the magic of devoted, deathless love: nature had been the mistress of his study; and from her teaching all the wonder came.

The blind girl never knew that ceilings were discolored; walls blotched and bare of plaster here and there; high crevices unstopped and widening every day; beams mouldering and tending downward. The blind girl never knew that iron was rusting, wood rotting, paper peeling off; the very size, and shape, and true proportion of the dwelling, withering away. The blind girl never knew that ugly shapes of delf⁴⁵ and earthenware were on the board;⁴⁶ that sorrow and faintheartedness were in the house; that Caleb's scanty hairs were turning greyer and more grey, before her sightless face. The blind girl never knew they had a master, cold, exacting, and uninterested: never knew that Tackleton was Tackleton in short; but lived in the belief of an eccentric humorist who loved to have his jest with them; and who while he was the guardian angel of their lives, disdained to hear one word of thankfulness.

And all was Caleb's doing; all the doing of her simple father! But he too had a Cricket on his hearth; and listening sadly to its music when the motherless blind child was very young, that spirit had inspired him with the thought that even her great deprivation might be almost changed into a blessing, and the girl made happy by these little means. For all the Cricket tribe are potent spirits, even though the people who hold converse with them do not know it (which is frequently the case); and there are not

in the unseen world, voices more gentle and more true; that may be so implicitly relied on, or that are so certain to give none but tenderest counsel; as the voices in which the spirits of the fireside and the hearth address themselves to human kind.

Caleb and his daughter were at work together in their usual working-room, which served them for their ordinary living-room as well; and a strange place it was. There were houses in it, finished and unfinished, for dolls of all stations⁴⁷ in life. Suburban tenements for dolls of moderate means; kitchens and single apartments for dolls of the lower classes; capital town residences for dolls of high estate. Some of these establishments were already furnished according to estimate, with a view to the convenience of dolls of limited income; others could be fitted on the most expensive scale, at a moment's notice, from whole shelves of chairs and tables, sofas, bedsteads, and upholstery. The nobility and gentry and public in general, for whose accommodation these tenements were designed, lay, here and there, in baskets, staring straight up at the ceiling; but in denoting their degrees in society, and confining them to their respective stations (which experience shows to be lamentably difficult in real life), the makers of these dolls had far improved on nature, who is often froward and perverse; for they, not resting on such arbitrary marks as satin, cotton-print, and bits of rag, had superadded striking personal differences which allowed of no mistake. Thus, the doll-lady of distinction had wax limbs of perfect symmetry; but only she and her compeers; the next grade in the social scale being made of leather; and the next of coarse linen stuff. As to the common-people, they had just

so many matches out of tinder-boxes⁴⁸ for their arms and legs, and there they were—established in their sphere at once, beyond the possibility of getting out of it.

There were various other samples of his handicraft, besides dolls, in Caleb Plummer's room. There were Noah's Arks, in which the birds and beasts were an uncommonly tight fit, I assure you; though they could be crammed in, anyhow, at the roof, and rattled and shaken into the smallest compass. By a bold poetical license,⁴⁹ most of these Noah's Arks had knockers on the doors; inconsistent appendages perhaps, as suggestive of morning callers and a postman, yet a pleasant finish to the outside of the building. There were scores of melancholy little carts which, when the wheels went round, performed most doleful music. Many small fiddles, drums, and other instruments of torture; no end of cannon, shields, swords, spears, and guns. There were little tumblers in red breeches, incessantly swarming up high obstacles of red-tape, and coming down, head first, on the other side; and there were innumerable old gentlemen of respectable, not to say venerable appearance, insanely flying over horizontal pegs, inserted for the purpose, in their own street doors. There were beasts of all sorts; horses, in particular, of every breed, from the spotted barrel on four pegs, with a small tippet for a mane, to the thoroughbred rocker on his highest mettle.⁵⁰ As it would have been hard to count the dozens upon dozens of grotesque figures that were ever ready to commit all sorts of absurdities on the turning of a handle; so it would have been no easy task to mention any human folly, vice, or weakness, that had not its type, immediate or remote, in Caleb Plummer's room. And

not in an exaggerated form; for very little handles will move men and women to as strange performances, as any toy was ever made to undertake.

In the midst of all these objects, Caleb and his daughter sat at work. The blind girl busy as a doll's dressmaker; Caleb painting and glazing the four-pair front of a desirable family mansion.

The care imprinted in the lines of Caleb's face, and his absorbed and dreamy manner, which would have sat well on some alchemist⁵¹ or abstruse student, were at first sight an odd contrast to his occupation, and the trivialities about him. But trivial things, invented and pursued for bread, become very serious matters of fact; and, apart from this consideration, I am not at all prepared to say, myself, that if Caleb had been a Lord Chamberlain,⁵² or a Member of Parliament, or a lawyer, or even a great speculator, he would have dealt in toys one whit less whimsical; while I have a very great doubt whether they would have been as harmless.

"So you were out in the rain last night, father, in your beautiful, new, great-coat," said Caleb's daughter.

"In my beautiful new great-coat," answered Caleb, glancing towards a clothes-line in the room, on which the sack-cloth garment previously described, was carefully hung up to dry.

"How glad I am you bought it, father!"

"And of such a tailor, too," said Caleb. "Quite a fashionable tailor. It's too good for me!"

The blind girl rested from her work, and laughed with delight, "Too good, father! What can be too good for you?"

"I'm half ashamed to wear it though," said Caleb

watching the effect of what he said, upon her brightening face; "upon my word. When I hear the boys and people say behind me, 'Halloa! Here's a swell!' I don't know which way to look. And when the beggar wouldn't go away last night; and, when I said I was a very common man, said 'No, your Honor! Bless your Honor, don't say that!' I was quite ashamed. I really felt as if I hadn't a right to wear it."

Happy blind girl! How merry she was, in her exultation!

"I see you, father," she said, clasping her hands, "as plainly, as if I had the eyes I never want when you are with me. A blue coat——"

"Bright blue," said Caleb.

"Yes, yes! Bright blue!" exclaimed the girl, turning up her radiant face; "the color I can just remember in the blessed sky! You told me it was blue before! A bright blue coat——"

"Made loose to the figure," suggested Caleb.

"Yes! Loose to the figure!" cried the blind girl, laughing heartily; "and in it you, dear father, with your merry eye, your smiling face, your free step, and your dark hair: looking so young and handsome!"

"Halloa! Halloa!" said Caleb. "I shall be vain, presently."

"I think you are, already," cried the blind girl, pointing at him, in her glee. "I know you, father! Ha ha ha! I've found you out, you see!"

How different the picture in her mind, from Caleb, as he sat observing her! She had spoken of his free step. She was right in that. For years and years, he never once had crossed that threshold at his own slow pace, but with a footfall counterfeited for her

ear; and never had he, when his heart was heaviest, forgotten the light tread that was to render hers so cheerful and courageous!

Heaven knows! But I think Caleb's vague bewilderment of manner may have half originated in his having confused himself about himself and everything around him, for the love of his blind daughter. How could the little man be otherwise than bewildered, after laboring for so many years to destroy his own identity, and that of all the objects that had any bearing on it!

"There we are," said Caleb, falling back a pace or two to form the better judgment of his work; "as near the real thing as sixpenn'orth of halfpence is to sixpence. What a pity that the whole front of the house opens at once! If there was only a staircase in it now, and regular doors to the rooms to go in at! But that's the worst of my calling, I'm always deluding myself, and swindling myself."

"You are speaking quite softly. You are not tired, father?"

"Tired," echoed Caleb, with a great burst of animation, "what should tire me, Bertha? *I* was never tired. What does it mean?"

To give the greater force to his words, he checked himself in an involuntary imitation of two half-length stretching and yawning figures on the mantel-shelf, who were represented as in one eternal state of weariness from the waist upwards; and hummed a fragment of a song. It was a Bacchanalian⁵³ song, something about a Sparkling Bowl; and he sang it with an assumption of a Devil-may-care voice, that made his face a thousand times more meagre and more thoughtful than ever.

"What! You're singing, are you?" said Tackleton, putting his head in, at the door. "Go it! I can't sing."

Nobody would have suspected him of it. He hadn't what is generally termed a singing face, by any means.

"I can't afford to sing," said Tackleton. "I'm glad you can. I hope you can afford to work too. Hardly time for both, I should think?"

"If you could only see him, Bertha, how he's winking at me!" whispered Caleb. "Such a man to joke! you'd think, if you didn't know him, he was in earnest—wouldn't you now?"

The blind girl smiled, and nodded.

"The bird that can sing and won't sing, must be made to sing, they say," grumbled Tackleton. "What about the owl that can't sing, and oughtn't to sing, and will sing; is there anything that *he* should be made to do?"

"The extent to which he's winking at this moment!" whispered Caleb to his daughter. "Oh, my gracious!"

"Always merry and light-hearted with us!" cried the smiling Bertha.

"Oh, you're there, are you?" answered Tackleton. "Poor idiot!"

He really did believe she was an idiot; and he founded the belief, I can't say whether consciously or not, upon her being fond of him.

"Well! and being there, how are you?" said Tackleton; in his grudging way.

"Oh! well; quite well. And as happy as even you can wish me to be. As happy as you would make the whole world, if you could!"

"Poor idiot!" muttered Tackleton. "No gleam of reason... Not a gleam!"

The blind girl took his hand and kissed it; held it for a moment in her own two hands; and laid her cheek against it tenderly, before releasing it. There was such unspeakable affection and such fervent gratitude in the act, that Tackleton himself was moved to say, in a milder growl than usual:

“What’s the matter now?”

“I stood it close beside my pillow when I went to sleep last night, and remembered it in my dreams. And when the day broke, and the glorious red sun—the *red* sun, father?”

“Red in the mornings and the evenings, Bertha,” said poor Caleb, with a woeful glance at his employer.

“When it rose, and the bright light I almost fear to strike myself against in walking, came into the room, I turned the little tree towards it, and blessed Heaven for making things so precious, and blessed you for sending them to cheer me!”

“Bedlam⁵⁴ broke loose!” said Tackleton under his breath. “We shall arrive at the strait-waistcoat⁵⁵ and mufflers⁵⁶ soon. We’re getting on!”

Caleb, with his hands hooked loosely in each other, stared vacantly before him while his daughter spoke, as if he really were uncertain (I believe he was) whether Tackleton had done anything to deserve her thanks, or not. If he could have been a perfectly free agent, at that moment, required, on pain of death, to kick the toy-merchant, or fall at his feet, according to his merits, I believe it would have been an even chance which course he would have taken. Yet Caleb knew that with his own hands he had brought the little rose-tree home for her, so carefully; and that with his own lips he had forged the innocent deception which should help to keep her from sus-

pecting how much, how very much, he every day denied himself, that she might be the happier.

"Bertha!" said Tackleton, assuming, for the nonce,⁵⁷ a little cordiality. "Come here."

"Oh! I can come straight to you! You needn't guide me!" she rejoined.

"Shall I tell you a secret, Bertha?"

"If you will!" she answered, eagerly.

How bright the darkened face! How adorned with light, the listening head!

"This is the day on which little what's-her-name, the spoilt child; Peerybingle's wife; pays her regular visit to you—makes her fantastic picnic here; an't it?" said Tackleton, with a strong expression of distaste for the whole concern.

"Yes," replied Bertha. "This is the day."

"I thought so!" said Tackleton. "I should like to join the party."

"Do you hear that, father!" cried the Blind Girl in an ecstasy.

"Yes, yes, I hear it," murmured Caleb, with the fixed look of a sleep-walker; "but I don't believe it. It's one of my lies, I've no doubt."

"You see I—I want to bring the Peerybingles a little more into company with May Fielding," said Tackleton. "I am going to be married to May."

"Married!" cried the blind girl, starting from him.

"She's such a con-founded idiot," muttered Tackleton, "that I was afraid she'd never comprehend me. Ah, Bertha! Married! Church, parson, clerk, beadle,⁵⁸ glass-coach, bells, breakfast, bride-cake, favors,⁵⁹ marrow-bones, cleavers, and all the rest of the tom-foolery. A wedding, you know; a wedding. Don't you know what a wedding is?"

"I know," replied the blind girl, in a gentle tone. "I understand!"

"Do you?" muttered Tackleton. "It's more than I expected. Well! On that account I want to join the party, and to bring May and her mother. I'll send in a little something or other, before the afternoon. A cold leg of mutton, or some comfortable trifle of that sort. You'll expect me?"

"Yes," she answered.

She had drooped her head, and turned away; and so stood, with her hands crossed, musing.

"I don't think you will," muttered Tackleton, looking at her; "for you seem to have forgotten all about it, already. Caleb!"

"I may venture to say I'm here, I suppose," thought Caleb. "Sir!"

"Take care she don't forget what I've been saying to her."

"*She* never forgets," returned Caleb. "It's one of the few things she an't clever in."

"Every man thinks his own geese swans," observed the toy-merchant, with a shrug. "Poor devil!"

Having delivered himself of which remark, with infinite contempt, old Gruff and Tackleton withdrew.

Bertha remained where he had left her, lost in meditation. The gaiety had vanished from her downcast face, and it was very sad. Three or four times, she shook her head, as if bewailing some remembrance or some loss; but her sorrowful reflections found no vent in words.

It was not until Caleb had been occupied, some time, in yoking a team of horses to a wagon by the summary process of nailing the harness to the vital

parts of their bodies, that she drew near to his working-stool, and sitting down beside him, said :

"Father, I am lonely in the dark. I want my eyes : my patient, willing eyes."

"Here they are," said Caleb. "Always ready. They are more yours than mine, Bertha, any hour in the four and twenty. What shall your eyes do for you, dear?"

"Look round the room, father."

"All right," said Caleb, "No sooner said than done, Bertha."

"Tell me about it."

"It's much the same as usual," said Caleb. "Homely, but very snug. The gay colors on the wall; the bright flowers on the plates and dishes; the shining wood, where there are beams or panels; the general cheerfulness and neatness of the building; make it very pretty."

Cheerful and neat it was wherever Bertha's hands could busy themselves. But nowhere else were cheerfulness and neatness possible, in the old crazy shed which Caleb's fancy so transformed.

"You have your working dress on, and are not so gallant as when you wear the handsome coat?" said Bertha, touching him.

"Not quite so gallant," answered Caleb. "Pretty brisk though."

"Father," said the blind girl, drawing close to his side, and stealing one arm round his neck. "Tell me something about May. She is very fair?"

"She is indeed," said Caleb. And she was indeed. It was quite a rare thing to Caleb, not to have to draw on his invention.

"Her hair is dark," said Bertha, pensively, "darker

than mine. Her voice is sweet and musical, I know. I have often loved to hear it. Her shape—”

“There’s not a doll’s in all the room to equal it,” said Caleb. “And her eyes!—”

He stopped; for Bertha had drawn closer round his neck; and from the arm that clung about him, came a warning pressure which he understood too well.

He coughed a moment, hammered for a moment, and then fell back upon the song about the Sparkling Bowl; his infallible resource in all such difficulties.

“Our friend, father; our benefactor. I am never tired, you know, of hearing about him.—Now was I, ever?” she said hastily.

“Of course not,” answered Caleb. “And with reason.”

“Ah! With how much reason!” cried the blind girl. With such fervency, that Caleb, though his motives were so pure, could not endure to meet her face; but dropped his eyes as if she could have read in them his innocent deceit.

“Then tell me again about him, dear father,” said Bertha. “Many times again! His face is benevolent, kind, and tender. Honest and true, I am sure it is. The manly heart that tries to cloak all favors with a show of roughness and unwillingness, beats in its every look and glance.”

“And makes it noble,” added Caleb in his quiet desperation.

“And makes it noble!” cried the blind girl. “He is older than May, father.”

“Ye-es,” said Caleb, reluctantly. “He’s a little older than May. But that don’t signify.”

“Oh father, yes! To be his patient companion in infirmity and age; to be his gentle nurse in sickness,

and his constant friend in suffering and sorrow; to know no weariness in working for his sake; to watch him, tend him; sit beside his bed and talk to him, awake; and pray for him asleep; what privileges these would be! What opportunities for proving all her truth and devotion to him! Would she do all this, dear father?"

"No doubt of it," said Caleb.

"I love her, father; I can love her from my soul!" exclaimed the blind girl. And saying so, she laid her poor blind face on Caleb's shoulder, and so wept and wept, that he was almost sorry to have brought that tearful happiness upon her.

In the meantime, there had been a pretty sharp commotion at John Peerybingle's; for little Mrs. Peerybingle naturally couldn't think of going anywhere without the baby; and to get the baby under weigh, took time. Not that there was much of the baby: speaking of it as a thing of weight and measure: but there was a vast deal to do about and about it, and it all had to be done by easy stages. For instance: when the baby was got, by hook and by crook, to a certain point of dressing, and you might have rationally supposed that another touch or two would finish him off, and turn him out a tip-top baby challenging the world, he was unexpectedly extinguished in a flannel cap, and hustled off to bed; where he simmered (so to speak) between two blankets for the best part of an hour. From this state of inaction he was then recalled, shining very much and roaring violently, to partake of well! I would rather say, if you'll permit me to speak generally—of a slight repast. After which, he went to sleep again. Mrs. Peerybingle took advantage of this interval, to make

herself as smart in a small way as ever you saw anybody in all your life; and, during the same short truce, Miss Slowboy insinuated herself into a spencer⁶⁰ of a fashion so surprising and ingenious, that it had no connection with herself, or anything else in the universe, but was a shrunken, dog's-eared, independent fact, pursuing its lonely course without the least regard to anybody. By this time, the baby, being all alive again, was invested, by the united efforts of Mrs. Peerybingle and Miss Slowboy, with a cream-colored mantle for its body, and a sort of nankeen⁶¹ raised-pie for its head; and so in course of time they all three got down to the door, where the old horse had already taken more than the full value of his day's toll out of the Turnpike Trust,⁶² by tearing up the road with his impatient autographs—and whence Boxer might be dimly seen in the remote perspective,⁶³ standing looking back, and tempting him to come on without orders.

As to a chair, or anything of that kind for helping Mrs. Peerybingle into the cart, you know very little of John, I flatter myself, if you think *that* was necessary. Before you could have seen him lift her from the ground, there she was in her place, fresh and rosy, saying, "John! How CAN you! Think of Tilly!"

If I might be allowed to mention a young lady's legs, on any terms, I would observe of Miss Slowboy's that there was a fatality about them which rendered them singularly liable to be grazed; and that she never effected the smallest ascent or descent, without recording the circumstance upon them with a notch, as Robinson Crusoe marked the days upon his wooden calendar. But as this might be considered ungenteel, I'll think of it.

"John? You've got the basket with the veal and

ham-pie and things; and the bottles of beer?" said Dot. "If you haven't, you must turn around again, this very minute."

"You're a nice little article," returned the Carrier, "to be talking about turning round, after keeping me a full quarter of an hour behind my time."

"I am sorry for it, John," said Dot in a great bustle, "but I really could not think of going to Bertha's—I would not do it, John, on any account—without the veal and ham-pie and things, and the bottles of beer. Way⁶⁴!"

This monosyllable was addressed to the horse, who didn't mind it at all.

"Oh *do* way, John!" said Mrs. Peerybingle. "Please!"

"It'll be time enough to do that," returned John, "when I begin to leave things behind me. The basket's here, safe enough."

"What a hard-hearted monster you must be, John, not to have said so, at once, and save me such a turn! I declared I wouldn't go to Bertha's without the veal and ham-pie and things, and the bottles of beer, for any money. Regularly once a fortnight ever since we have been married, John, have we made our little picnic there. If anything was to go wrong with it, I should almost think we were never to be lucky again."

"It was a kind thought in the first instance," said the Carrier; "and I honor you for it, little woman."

"My dear John," replied Dot, turning very red. "Don't talk about honoring *me*. Good Gracious!"

"By the bye—" observed the Carrier. "That old gentleman,——"

Again so visibly, and instantly embarrassed.

"He's an odd fish," said the Carrier, looking straight along the road before them. "I can't make him out. I don't believe there's any harm in him."

"None at all. I'm—I'm sure there's none at all."

"Yes?" said the Carrier, with his eyes attracted to her face by the great earnestness of her manner. "I am glad you feel so certain of it, because it's a confirmation to me. It's curious that he should have taken it into his head to ask leave to go on lodging with us; an't it? Things come about so strangely."

"So very strangely," she rejoined in a low voice: scarcely audible.

"However, he's a good-natured old gentleman," said John, "and pays as a gentleman, and I think his word is to be relied upon, like a gentleman's. I had quite a long talk with him this morning: he can hear me better already, he says, as he gets more used to my voice. He told me a great deal about himself, and I told him a good deal about myself, and a rare lot of questions he asked me. I gave him information about my having two beats, you know, in my business; one day to the right from our house and back again; another day to the left from our house and back again (for he's a stranger and don't know the names of places about here;) and he seemed quite pleased. 'Why, then I shall be returning home to-night your way,' he says, 'when I thought you'd be coming in an exactly opposite direction. That's capital. I may trouble you for another lift perhaps, but I'll engage not to fall so sound asleep again.' He *was* sound asleep, sure-ly!—Dot! what are you thinking of?"

"Thinking of, John? I—I was listening to you."

"Oh! That's all right!" said the honest Carrier. "I was afraid, from the look of your face, that I had

gone rambling on so long, as to set you thinking about something else. I was very near it, I'll be bound."

Dot making no reply, they jogged on, for some little time, in silence. But it was not easy to remain silent very long in John Peerybingle's cart, for everybody on the road had something to say; though it might only be "How are you!" and indeed it was very often nothing else, still, to give that back again in the right spirit of cordiality, required, not merely a nod and a smile, but as wholesome an action of the lungs withal as a long-winded Parliamentary speech. Sometimes, passengers on foot, or horseback, plodded on a little way beside the cart, for the express purpose of having a chat; and then there was a great deal to be said on both sides.

Then, Boxer gave occasion to more good-natured recognitions of and by the Carrier, than half-a-dozen Christians could have done? Everybody knew him, all along the road—especially the fowls and pigs, who when they saw him approaching, with his body all on one side, and his ears pricked up inquisitively, and that knob of a tail making the most of itself in the air, immediately withdrew into remote back settlements, without waiting for the honor of a nearer acquaintance. He had business everywhere; going down all the turnings, looking into all the wells, bolting in and out of all the cottages, dashing into the midst of all the dame-schools,⁶⁵ fluttering all the pigeons, magnifying the tails of all the cats, and trotting into the public-houses⁶⁶ like a regular customer. Wherever he went, somebody or other might have been heard to cry, "Halloa! Here's Boxer!" and out came that somebody forthwith, accompanied by at least two or

three other somebodies, to give John Peerybingle and his pretty wife, Good Day.

The packages and parcels for the errand cart, were numerous; and there were many stoppages to take them in and give them out; which were not by any means the worst parts of the journey. Some people were so full of expectation about their parcels, and other people were so full of wonder about their parcels, and other people were so full of inexhaustible directions about their parcels, and John had such a lively interest in all the parcels, that it was as good as a play. Likewise, there were articles to carry, which required to be considered and discussed, and in reference to the adjustment and disposition of which, councils had to be holden by the Carrier and the senders: at which Boxer usually assisted, in short fits of the closest attention, and long fits of tearing round and round the assembled sages⁶⁷ and barking himself hoarse. Of all these little incidents, Dot was the amused and open-eyed spectatress from her chair in the cart; and as she sat there, looking on: a charming little portrait framed to admiration by the tilt: there was no lack of nudgings and glancings and whisperings and envyings among the younger men, I promise you. And this delighted John the Carrier, beyond measure; for he was proud to have his little wife admired; knowing that she didn't mind it—that, if anything, she rather liked it perhaps.

The trip was a little foggy, to be sure, in the January weather; and was raw and cold. But who cared for such trifles? Not Dot, decidedly. Not Tilly Slow-boy, for she deemed sitting in a cart, on any terms, to be the highest point of human joys; the crowning circumstance of earthly hopes. Not the baby, I'll be

sworn, for it's not in baby nature to be warmer or more sound asleep, though its capacity is great in both respects, than that blessed young Peerybingle was, all the way.

You couldn't see very far in the fog, of course; but you could see a great deal, oh, a great deal! It's astonishing how much you may see in a thicker fog than that, if you will only take the trouble to look for it. Why even to sit watching for the fairy-rings⁶⁸ in the fields, and for the patches of hoar-frost still lingering in the shade, near hedges and by trees, was a pleasant occupation: to make no mention of the unexpected shapes in which the trees themselves came starting out of the mist, and glided into it again. The hedges were tangled and bare, and waved a multitude of blighted garlands in the wind; but there was no discouragement in this. It was agreeable to contemplate; for it made the fireside warmer in possession, and the summer greener in expectancy. The river looked chilly; but it was in motion, and moving at a good pace; which was a great point. The canal was rather slow and torpid; that must be admitted. Never mind. It would freeze the sooner when the frost set fairly in, and then there would be skating, and sliding; and the heavy old barges, frozen up somewhere, near a wharf, would smoke their rusty iron chimney-pipes all day, and have a lazy time of it.

In one place, there was a great mound of weeds or stubble burning; and they watched the fire, so white in the day time, flaring through the fog, with only here and there a dash of red in it, until, in consequence as she observed of the smoke "getting up her nose," Miss Slowboy choked—she could do anything of that sort on the smallest provocation—and woke the baby,

who wouldn't go to sleep again. But Boxer, who was in advance some quarter of a mile or so, had already passed the outposts of the town, and gained the corner of the street where Caleb and his daughter lived; and long before they reached the door, he and the blind girl were on the pavement waiting to receive them.

Boxer, by the way, made certain delicate distinctions of his own, in his communication with Bertha, which persuade me fully that he knew her to be blind. He never sought to attract her attention by looking at her, as he often did with other people, but touched her, invariably. What experience he could ever have had of blind people or blind dogs, I don't know. He had never lived with a blind master; nor had Mr. Boxer the elder, nor Mrs. Boxer, nor any of his respectable family on either side, ever been visited with blindness, that I am aware of. He may have found it out for himself, perhaps, but he had got hold of it somehow; and therefore he had hold of Bertha too, by the skirt, and kept hold, until Mrs. Peerybingle and the baby, and Miss Slowboy, and the basket, were all got safely within doors.

May Fielding was already come; and so was her mother—a little querulous chip of an old lady with a peevish face, who, in right of having preserved a waist like a bedpost, was supposed to be a most transcendent figure; and who, in consequence of having once been better off, or of laboring under an impression that she might have been, if something had happened which never did happen, and seemed to have never been particularly likely to come to pass—but it's all the same—was very genteel and patronizing indeed. Gruff and Tackleton was also there, doing the agreeable, with the evident sensation of being as perfectly

at home, and as unquestionably in his own element, as a fresh young salmon on the top of the Great Pyramid.⁶⁹

"May! My dear old friend!" cried Dot, running up to meet her. "What a happiness to see you!"

Her old friend was, to the full, as hearty and as glad as she; and it really was, if you'll believe me, quite a pleasant sight to see them embrace. Tackleton was a man of taste beyond all question. May was very pretty.

You know sometimes, when you are used to a pretty face, how, when it comes into contact and comparison with another pretty face, it seems for the moment to be homely and faded, and hardly to deserve the high opinion you have had of it. Now, this was not at all the case, either with Dot or May; for May's face set off Dot's, and Dot's face set off May's, so naturally and agreeably, that, as John Peerybingle was very near saying when he came into the room, they ought to have been born sisters—which was the only improvement you could have suggested.

Tackleton had brought his leg of mutton, and, wonderful to relate, a tart besides—but we don't mind a little dissipation when our brides are in the case; we don't get married every day—and in addition to these dainties, there were the veal and ham-pie, and "things," as Mrs. Peerybingle called them; which were chiefly nuts and oranges, and cakes, and such small deer. When the repast was set forth on the board, flanked by Caleb's contribution, which was a great wooden bowl of smoking potatoes (he was prohibited, by solemn compact, from producing any other viands), Tackleton led his intended mother-in-law to the post of honor. For the better gracing of this

place at the high festival, the majestic old soul had adorned herself with a cap, calculated to inspire the thoughtless with sentiments of awe. She also wore her gloves. But let us be genteel, or die!

Caleb sat next his daughter; Dot and her old school-fellow were side by side; the good Carrier took care of the bottom of the table. Miss Slowboy was isolated, for the time being from every article of furniture but the chair she sat on, that she might have nothing else to knock the baby's head against.

As Tilly stared about her at the dolls and toys, they stared at her and at the company. The venerable old gentlemen at the street doors (who were all in full action) showed especial interest in the party; pausing occasionally before leaping, as if they were listening to the conversation: and then plunging wildly over and over, a great many times, without halting for breath,—as in a frantic state of delight with the whole proceedings.

Certainly, if these old gentlemen were inclined to have a fiendish joy, in the contemplation of Tackleton's discomfiture, they had good reason to be satisfied. Tackleton couldn't get on at all; and the more cheerful his intended bride became in Dot's society, the less he liked it, though he had brought them together for that purpose. For he was a regular dog in the manger,⁷⁰ was Tackleton; and when they laughed, and he couldn't, he took it into his head, immediately, that they must be laughing at him.

"Ah, May!" said Dot. "Dear dear, what changes! To talk of those merry school-days makes one young again."

"Why, you an't particularly old, at any time, are you?" said Tackleton.

"Look at my sober plodding husband there," returned Dot. "He adds twenty years to my age at least. Don't you, John?"

"Forty," John replied.

"How many *you'll* add to May's, I'm sure I don't know," said Dot, laughing. "But she can't be much less than a hundred years of age on her next birthday."

"Ha ha!" laughed Tackleton. Hollow as a drum, that laugh though. And he looked as if he could have twisted Dot's neck comfortably.

"Dear, dear!" said Dot. "Only to remember how we used to talk, at school, about the husbands we would choose. I don't know how young, and how handsome, and how gay, and how lively, mine was not to be! And as to May's—! Ah, dear! I don't know whether to laugh or cry, when I think what silly girls we were."

May seemed to know which to do; for the color flashed into her face, and tears stood in her eyes.

"Even the very persons themselves—real live young men—were fixed on sometimes," said Dot. "We little thought how things would come about. I never fixed on John I'm sure; I never so much as thought of him. And if I had told you, you were ever to be married to Mr. Tackleton, why, you'd have slapped me. Wouldn't you, May?"

Though May didn't say yes, she certainly didn't say no, or express no, by any means.

Tackleton laughed—quite shouted, he laughed so loud. John Peerybingle laughed too, in his ordinary good-natured and contented manner; but his was a mere whisper of a laugh to Tackleton's.

"You couldn't help yourselves, for all that. You

couldn't resist us, you see," said Tackleton. "Here we are! Here we are! Where are your gay young bridegrooms now!"

"Some of them are dead," said Dot; "and some of them forgotten. Some of them, if they could stand among us at this moment, would not believe we were the same creatures; would not believe that what they saw and heard was real, and we *could* forget them so. No! they would not believe one word of it!"

"Why, Dot!" exclaimed the Carrier. "Little woman!"

She had spoken with such earnestness and fire, that she stood in need of some recalling to herself, without doubt. Her husband's check was very gentle, for he merely interfered, as he supposed, to shield old Tackleton; but it proved effectual, for she stopped, and said no more. There was an uncommon agitation, even in her silence, which the wary Tackleton, who had brought his half-shut eye to bear upon her, noted closely; and remembered to some purpose too, as you will see.

May uttered no word, good or bad, but sat quite still, with her eyes cast down; and made no sign of interest in what had passed. The good lady her mother now interposed: observing, in the first instance, that girls were girls, and bygones bygones, and that so long as young people were young and thoughtless, they would probably conduct themselves like young and thoughtless persons: with two or three other positions of a no less sound and incontrovertible character. She then remarked, in a devout spirit, that she thanked Heaven she had always found in her daughter May, a dutiful and obedient child; for which she took no credit to herself, though she had

every reason to believe it was entirely owing to herself. With regard to Mr. Tackleton she said, That he was in a moral point of view an undeniable individual; and That he was in an eligible point of view a son-in-law to be desired, no one in their senses could doubt. (She was very emphatic here.) With regard to the family into which he was so soon about, after some solicitation, to be admitted, she believed Mr. Tackleton knew that, although reduced in purse, it had some pretensions to gentility; and if certain circumstances, not wholly unconnected, she would go so far as to say, with the indigo trade,⁷¹ but to which she would not more particularly refer, had happened differently, it might perhaps have been in possession of wealth. She then remarked that she would not allude to the past, and would not mention that her daughter had for some time rejected the suit of Mr. Tackleton; and that she would not say a great many other things which she did say, at great length. Finally, she delivered it as the general result of her observation and experience, that those marriages in which there was least of what was romantically and sillily called love, were always the happiest; and that she anticipated the greatest possible amount of bliss—not rapturous bliss; but the solid, steady-going article—from the approaching nuptials. She concluded by informing the company that to-morrow was the day she had lived for, expressly; and that when it was over, she would desire nothing better than to be packed up and disposed of, in any genteel place of burial.

As these remarks were quite unanswerable: which is the happy property of all remarks that are sufficiently wide of the purpose: they changed the current of the conversation, and diverted the general attention to

the veal and ham-pie, the cold mutton, the potatoes, and the tart. In order that the bottled beer might not be slighted, John Peerybingle proposed To-morrow: the Wedding-Day; and called upon them to drink a bumper⁷² to it, before he proceeded on his journey.

For you ought to know that he only rested there, and gave the old horse a bait.⁷³ He had to go some four or five miles farther on; and when he returned in the evening, he called for Dot, and took another rest on his way home. This was the order of the day on all the picnic⁷⁴ occasions, and had been, ever since their institution.

There were two persons present, beside the bride and bridegroom elect, who did but indifferent honor to the toast. One of these was Dot, too flushed and discomposed to adapt herself to any small occurrence of the moment; the other, Bertha, who rose up hurriedly, before the rest, and left the table.

"Good bye!" said stout John Peerybingle, pulling on his dreadnought⁷⁵ coat. "I shall be back at the old time. Good bye all!"

"Good bye, John," returned Caleb.

He seemed to say it by rote, and to wave his hand in the same unconscious manner; for he stood observing Bertha with an anxious wondering face, that never altered its expression.

"Good bye, young shaver!" said the jolly Carrier, bending down to kiss the child; which Tilly Slowboy, now intent upon her knife and fork, had deposited asleep (and strange to say, without damage) in a little cot of Bertha's furnishing; "good bye! Time will come, I suppose, when *you*'ll turn out into the cold, my little friend, and leave your old father to

enjoy his pipe and his rheumatics in the chimney-corner; eh? Where's Dot?"

"I'm here, John!" she said, starting.

"Come, come!" returned the Carrier, clapping his sounding hands. "Where's the pipe?"

"I quite forgot the pipe, John."

Forgot the pipe! Was such a wonder ever heard of! She! Forgot the pipe!

"I'll—I'll fill it directly. It's soon done."

But it was not so soon done, either. It lay in the usual place; the Carrier's dreadnought pocket; with the little pouch, her own work, from which she was used to fill it; but her hand shook so, that she entangled it (and yet her hand was small enough to have come out easily, I am sure), and bungled terribly. The filling of the pipe and lighting it, those little offices in which I have commended her discretion, if you recollect; were vilely done, from first to last. During the whole process, Tackleton stood looking on maliciously with the half-closed eye; which, whenever it met hers—or caught it, for it can hardly be said to have ever met another eye: rather being a kind of trap to snatch it up—augmented her confusion in a most remarkable degree.

"Why, what a clumsy Dot you are, this afternoon!" said John. "I could have done it better myself, I verily believe!"

With these good-natured words, he strode away; and presently was heard, in company with Boxer, and the old horse, and the cart, making lively music down the road. What time the dreamy Caleb still stood, watching his blind daughter, with the same expression on his face.

"Bertha!" said Caleb softly. "What has happened?"

How changed you are, my darling, in a few hours—since this morning. *You* silent and dull all day! What is it? Tell me!”

“Oh father, father!” cried the Blind Girl, bursting into tears. “Oh my hard, hard fate!”

Caleb drew his hand across his eyes before he answered her.

“But think how cheerful and how happy you have been, Bertha! How good, and how much loved, by many people.”

“That strikes me to the heart, dear father! Always so mindful of me! Always so kind to me!”

Caleb was very much perplexed to understand her.

“To be—to be blind, Bertha, my poor dear,” he faltered, “is a great affliction; but——”

“I have never felt it!” cried the blind girl. “I have never felt it, in its fulness. Never! I have sometimes wished that I could see you, or could see him; only once, dear father; only for one little minute; that I might know what it is I treasure up,” she laid her hands upon her breast, “and hold here! That I might be sure I have it right! And sometimes (but then I was a child) I have wept, in my prayers at night, to think that when your images ascended from my heart to Heaven, they might not be the true resemblance of yourselves. But I have never had these feelings long. They have passed away and left me tranquil and contented.”

“And they will again,” said Caleb.

“But father! Oh my good gentle father, bear with me, if I am wicked!” said the blind girl. “This is not the sorrow that so weighs me down!”

Her father could not choose but let his moist eyes

overflow ; she was so earnest and pathetic. But he did not understand her, yet.

"Bring her to me," said Bertha. "I cannot hold it closed and shut within myself. Bring her to me, father!"

She knew he hesitated, and said, "May. Bring May!"

May heard the mention of her name, and coming quietly towards her, touched her on the arm. The blind girl turned immediately, and held her by both hands.

"Look into my face, dear heart, sweet heart!" said Bertha. "Read it with your beautiful eyes, and tell me if the truth is written on it."

"Dear Bertha, yes!"

The blind girl still, upturning the blank sightless face, down which the tears were coursing fast, addressed her in these words :

"There is not, in my soul, a wish or thought that is not for your good, bright May! There is not, in my soul, a grateful recollection stronger than the deep remembrance which is stored there, of the many many times when, in the full pride of sight and beauty, you have had consideration for blind Bertha, even when we two were children, or when Bertha was as much a child as ever blindness can be! Every blessing on your head! Light upon your happy course! Not the less, my dear May;" and she drew towards her, in a closer grasp; "not the less, my bird, because, to-day, the knowledge that you are to be his wife has wrung my heart almost to breaking! Father, May, Mary! oh forgive me that it is so, for the sake of all he has done to relieve the weariness of my dark life: and for the sake of the belief you have in me, when I

call Heaven to witness that I could not wish him married to a wife more worthy of his goodness!"

While speaking, she had released May Fielding's hands, and clasped her garments in an attitude of mingled supplication and love. Sinking lower and lower down, as she proceeded in her strange confession, she dropped at last at the feet of her friend, and hid her blind face in the folds of her dress.

"Great Power!" exclaimed her father, smitten at one blow with the truth, "have I deceived her from the cradle, but to break her heart at last!"

It was well for all of them that Dot, that beaming, useful, busy little Dot—for such she was, whatever faults she had, and however you may learn to hate her, in good time—it was well for all of them, I say, that she was there: or where this would have ended, it were hard to tell. But Dot, recovering her self-possession, interposed, before May could reply, or Caleb say another word.

"Come come, dear Bertha! come away with me! Give her your arm, May. So! How composed she is, you see, already; and how good it is of her to mind us," said the cheery little woman, kissing her upon the forehead. "Come away, dear Bertha! Come! and here's her good father will come with her; won't you Caleb? To—be—sure!"

Well, well! she was a noble little Dot in such things, and it must have been an obdurate nature that could have withstood her influence. When she had got poor Caleb and his Bertha away, that they might comfort and console each other, as she knew they only could, she presently came bouncing back—the saying is, as fresh as any daisy; *I* say fresher—to mount guard over that bridling little piece of consequence in

the cap and gloves, and prevent the dear old creature from making discoveries.

"So bring me the precious baby, Tilly," said she, drawing a chair to the fire; "and while I have it in my lap, here's Mrs. Fielding, Tilly, will tell me all about the management of babies, and put me right in twenty points where I'm as wrong as can be. Won't you, Mrs. Fielding?"

Not even the Welsh Giant,⁷⁶ who according to the popular expression, was so "slow" as to perform a fatal surgical operation upon himself, in emulation of a juggling-trick achieved by his arch-enemy at breakfast-time; not even he fell half so readily into the snare prepared for him, as the old lady did into this artful pitfall. The fact of Tackleton having walked out; and furthermore, of two or three people having been talking together at a distance, for two minutes, leaving her to her own resources; was quite enough to have put her on her dignity, and the bewailment of that mysterious convulsion in the indigo trade, for four-and-twenty hours. But this becoming deference to her experience, on the part of the young mother, was so irresistible, that after a short affectation of humility, she began to enlighten her with the best grace in the world; and sitting bolt upright before the wicked Dot, she did, in half an hour, deliver more infallible domestic recipes and precepts, than would (if acted on) have utterly destroyed and done up that young Peerybingle, though he had been an infant Samson.⁷⁷

To change the theme, Dot did a little needlework—she carried the contents of a whole work box in her pocket; however she contrived it, *I* don't know—then did a little nursing; then a little more needlework;

then had a little whispering chat with May, while the old lady dozed and so in little bits of bustle, which was quite her manner always, found it a very short afternoon. Then as it grew dark, and as it was a solemn part of this institution of the picnic that she should perform all Bertha's household tasks, she trimmed the fire, and swept the hearth, and set the tea-board out, and drew the curtain, and lighted a candle. Then, she played an air or two on a rude kind of harp, which Caleb had contrived for Bertha; and played them very well; for nature had made her delicate little ear as choice a one for music as it would have been for jewels, if she had had any to wear. By this time it was the established hour for having tea; and Tackleton came back again, to share the meal, and spend the evening.

Caleb and Bertha had returned some time before, and Caleb had sat down to his afternoon's work. But he couldn't settle to it, poor fellow, being anxious and remorseful for his daughter. It was touching to see him sitting idle on his working-stool, regarding her so wistfully; and always saying in his face, "Have I deceived her from her cradle, but to break her heart!"

When it was night, and tea was done, and Dot had nothing more to do in washing up the cups and saucers; in a word—for I must come to it, and there is no use in putting it off—when the time drew nigh for expecting the Carrier's return in every sound of distant wheels; her manner changed again; her color came and went; and she was very restless. Not as good wives are, when listening for their husbands. No, no, no. It was another sort of restlessness from that.

Wheels heard. A horse's feet. The barking of a

dog. The gradual approach of all the sounds. The scratching paw of Boxer at the door!

"Whose step is that!" cried Bertha, starting up.

"Whose step?" returned the Carrier, standing in the portal, with his brown face ruddy as a winter berry from the keen night air. "Why, mine."

"The other step," said Bertha. "The man's tread behind you!"

"She is not to be deceived," observed the Carrier, laughing. "Come along, Sir. You'll be welcome, never fear!"

He spoke in a loud tone; and as he spoke, the deaf old gentleman entered.

"He's not so much a stranger, that you haven't seen him once, Caleb," said the Carrier. "You'll give him houseroom till we go?"

"Oh, surely, John; and take it as an honor."

"He's the best company on earth, to talk secrets in," said John. "I have reasonable good lungs, but he tries 'em, I can tell you. Sit down, Sir. All friends here, and glad to see you!"

When he had imparted this assurance, in a voice that amply corroborated what he had said about his lungs, he added in his natural tone, "A chair in the chimney-corner, and leave to sit quite silent and look pleasantly about him, is all he cares for. He's easily pleased."

Bertha had been listening intently. She called Caleb to her side, when he had set the chair, and asked him, in a low voice, to describe their visitor. When he had done so (truly now; with scrupulous fidelity), she moved, for the first time since he had come in; and sighed; and seemed to have no further interest concerning him.

The Carrier was in high spirits, good fellow that he was; and fonder of his little wife than ever.

"A clumsy Dot she was, this afternoon!" he said, encircling her with his rough arm, as she stood, removed from the rest; "and yet, I like her somehow. See yonder, Dot!"

He pointed to the old man. She looked down. I think she trembled.

"He's—ha ha ha!—he's full of admiration for you!" said the Carrier. "Talked of nothing else, the whole way here. Why, he's a brave old boy. I like him for it!"

"I wish he had had a better subject, John;" she said, with an uneasy glance about the room; at Tackleton especially.

"A better subject!" cried the jovial John. "There's no such thing. Come! off with the great-coat, off with the thick shawl, off with the heavy wrappers! and a cosy half-hour by the fire! My humble service, Mistress. A game at cribbage,⁷⁸ you and I? That's hearty. The cards and board,⁷⁹ Dot. And a glass of beer here, if there's any left, small wife!"

His challenge was addressed to the old lady, who accepting it with gracious readiness, they were soon engaged upon the game. At first, the Carrier looked about him sometimes, with a smile, or now and then called Dot to peep over his shoulder at his hand, and advise him on some knotty point. But his adversary being a rigid disciplinarian, and subject to an occasional weakness in respect to pegging more than she was entitled to, required such vigilance on his part, as left him neither eyes nor ears to spare. Thus, his whole attention gradually became absorbed upon the cards; and he thought of nothing else, until a hand

upon his shoulder restored him to a consciousness of Tackleton.

"I am sorry to disturb you—but a word, directly."

"I'm going to deal," returned the Carrier. "It's a crisis."

"It is," said Tackleton. "Come here, man!"

There was that in his pale face which made the other rise immediately, and ask him, in a hurry, what the matter was.

"Hush! John Peerybingle," said Tackleton. "I am sorry for this. I am indeed. I have been afraid of it. I have suspected it from the first."

"What is it?" asked the Carrier, with a frightened aspect.

"Hush! I'll show you, if you'll come with me."

The Carrier accompanied him, without another word. They went across a yard, where the stars were shining; and by a little side door, into Tackleton's own counting-house, where there was a glass window, commanding the ware-room: which was closed for the night. There was no light in the counting-house itself, but there were lamps in the long narrow ware-room; and consequently the window was bright.

"A moment!" said Tackleton. "Can you bear to look through that window, do you think?"

"Why not?" returned the Carrier.

"A moment more," said Tackleton. "Don't commit any violence. It's of no use. It's dangerous too. You're a strong-made man; and you might do murder before you know it."

The Carrier looked him in the face, and recoiled a step as if he had been struck. In one stride he was at the window, and he saw—

Oh shadow on the hearth! Oh truthful Cricket!
Oh perfidious⁸⁰ wife!

He saw her, with the old man; old no longer, but erect and gallant: bearing in his hand the false white hair that had won his way into their desolate and miserable home. He saw her listening to him, as he bent his head to whisper in her ear; and suffering him to clasp her round the waist, as they move slowly down the dim wooden gallery towards the door by which they had entered it. He saw them stop, and saw her turn—to have the face, the face he loved so, so presented to his view!—and saw her, with her own hands, adjust the lie upon his head, laughing, as she did it, at his unsuspecting nature!

He clenched his strong right hand at first, as if it would have beaten down a lion. But opening it immediately again, he spread it out before the eyes of Tackleton (for he was tender of her, even then), and so, as they passed out, fell down upon a desk, and was as weak as any infant.

He was wrapped up to the chin, and busy with his horse and parcels, when she came into the room, prepared for going home.

“Now John dear! Good night, May! Good night, Bertha!”

Could she kiss them? Could she be blithe⁸¹ and cheerful in her parting? Could she venture to reveal her face to them without a blush? Yes. Tackleton observed her closely; and she did all this.

Tilly was hushing the baby; and she crossed and recrossed Tackleton, a dozen times, repeating drowsily:—

“Did the knowledge that it was to be its wives, then, wring its hearts almost to breaking; and did its fathers

deceive it from its cradles but to break its hearts at last!"

"Now Tilly, give me the baby. Good night, Mr. Tackleton. Where's John, for Goodness' sake?"

"He's going to walk, beside the horse's head," said Tackleton; who helped her to her seat.

"My dear John. Walk? To-night?"

The muffled figure of her husband made a hasty sign in the affirmative; and the false stranger and the little nurse being in their places, the old horse moved off. Boxer, the unconscious Boxer, running on before, running back, running round and round the cart, and barking as triumphantly and merrily as ever.

When Tackleton had gone off likewise, escorting May and her mother home, poor Caleb sat down by the fire beside his daughter; anxious and remorseful at the core; and still saying in his wistful contemplation of her, "Have I deceived her from her cradle, but to break her heart at last!"

The toys that had been set in motion for the baby, had all stopped and run down, long ago. In the faint light and silence, the imperturbably calm dolls; the agitated rocking-horses with distended eyes and nostrils; the old gentlemen at the street doors, standing, half doubled up, upon their failing knees and ankles; the wry-faced nut-crackers; the very beasts upon their way into the ark, in twos, like a boarding-school out walking; might have been imagined to be stricken motionless with fantastic wonder, at Dot being false, or Tackleton beloved, under any combination of circumstances.

CHIRP THE THIRD

THE Dutch clock in the corner struck Ten, when the Carrier sat down by his fireside, so troubled and grief-worn, that he seemed to scare the Cuckoo, who, having cut his ten melodious announcements as short as possible, plunged back into the Moorish Palace again, and clapped his little door behind him, as if the unwonted spectacle were too much for his feelings.

If the little Haymaker had been armed with the sharpest of scythes, and had cut at every stroke into the Carrier's heart, he never could have gashed and wounded it, as Dot had done.

It was a heart so full of love for her; so bound up and held together by innumerable threads of winning remembrance, spun from the daily working of her many qualities of endearment; it was a heart in which she had enshrined herself so gently and so closely; a heart so single and so earnest in its truth; so strong in right, so weak in wrong: that it could cherish neither passion nor revenge at first, and had only room to hold the broken image of its idol.⁸²

But slowly, slowly; as the Carrier sat brooding on his hearth, now cold and dark; other and fiercer thoughts began to rise within him, as an angry wind comes rising in the night. The stranger was beneath his outraged roof. Three steps would take him to his chamber-door. One blow would beat it in. "You might do murder before you know it," Tackleton had said. How could it be murder, if he gave the villain

time to grapple with him hand to hand! He was the younger man.

It was an ill-timed thought, bad for the dark mood of his mind. It was an angry thought, goading him to some avenging act, that should change the cheerful house into a haunted place which lonely travellers would dread to pass by night; and where the timid would see shadows struggling in the ruined windows when the moon was dim, and hear wild noises in the stormy weather.

He was the younger man! Yes, yes; some lover who had won the heart that *he* had never touched. Some lover of her early choice: of whom she had thought and dreamed: for whom she had pined and pined: when he had fancied her so happy by his side. Oh agony to think of it!

She had been above stairs with the baby, getting it to bed. As he sat brooding on the hearth, she came close beside him, without his knowledge—in the turning of the rack of his great misery, he lost all other sounds—and put her little stool at his feet. He only knew it, when he felt her hand upon his own, and saw her looking up into his face.

With wonder? No. It was his first impression, and he was fain to look at her again, to set it right. No, not with wonder. With an eager and inquiring look; but not with wonder. At first it was alarmed and serious; then it changed into a strange, wild, dreadful smile of recognition of his thoughts; then there was nothing but her clasped hands on her brow, and her bent head, and falling hair.

Though the power of Omnipotence had been his to wield at that moment, he had too much of its diviner property of mercy in his breast to have

turned one feather's weight of it against her. But he could not bear to see her crouching down upon the little seat where he had often looked on her, with love and pride, so innocent and gay; and when she rose and left him, sobbing as she went, he felt it a relief to have the vacant place beside him rather than her so long cherished presence. This in itself was anguish keener than all: reminding him how desolate he was become, and how the great bond of his life was rent asunder.

The more he felt this, and the more he knew he could have better borne to see her lying prematurely dead before him with their little child upon her breast, the higher and the stronger rose his wrath against his enemy. He looked about him for a weapon.

There was a gun, hanging on the wall. He took it down, and moved a pace or two towards the door of the perfidious stranger's room. He knew the gun was loaded. Some shadowy idea that it was just to shoot this man like a wild beast, seized him, and dilated in his mind until it grew into a monstrous demon in complete possession of him, casting out all milder thoughts and setting up its undivided empire.

That phrase is wrong. Not casting out his milder thoughts, but artfully transforming them. Changing them into scourges to drive him on. Turning water into blood, Love into hate, Gentleness into blind ferocity. Her image, sorrowing, humbled, but still pleading to his tenderness and mercy with resistless power, never left his mind; but staying there, it urged him to the door; raised the weapon to his shoulder; fitted and nerved his finger to the trigger; and cried "Kill him! In his bed!"

He reversed the gun to beat the stock upon the

door; he already held it lifted in the air; some indistinct design was in his thoughts of calling out to him to fly, for God's sake by the window—

When, suddenly, the struggling fire illumined the whole chimney with a glow of light; and the Cricket on the hearth began to chirp!

No sound he could have heard; no human voice, not even hers; could so have moved and softened him. The artless words in which she had told him of her love for this same Cricket, were once more freshly spoken; her trembling, earnest manner at the moment, was again before him; her pleasant voice—Oh what a voice it was, for making household music at the fireside of an honest man!—thrilled through and through his better nature, and awoke it into life and action.

He recoiled from the door, like a man walking in his sleep, awakened from a frightful dream; and put the gun aside. Claspng his hands before his face, he then sat down again beside the fire, and found relief in tears.

The Cricket on the hearth came out into the room, and stood in fairy shape before him.

“‘I love it,’” said the fairy voice, repeating what he well remembered, “‘for the many times I have heard it, and the many thoughts its harmless music has given me.’”

“She said so!” cried the Carrier. “True!”

“‘This has been a happy home, John; and I love the Cricket for its sake!’”

“It has been, Heaven knows,” returned the Carrier. “She made it happy, always,—until now.”

“So gracefully sweet-tempered; so domestic, joyful, busy, and light-hearted!” said the voice.

"Otherwise I never could have loved her as I did," returned the Carrier.

The voice, correcting him, said "do."

The Carrier repeated "as I did." But not firmly. His faltering tongue resisted his control, and would speak in its own way, for itself and him.

The figure, in an attitude of invocation,⁸³ raised its hand and said :

"Upon your own hearth——"

"The hearth she has blighted," interposed the Carrier.

"The hearth she has—how often!—blessed and brightened," said the Cricket: "the hearth which, but for her, were only a few stones and bricks and rusty bars, but which has been, through her, the altar of your home; on which you have nightly sacrificed some petty passion, selfishness, or care, and offered up the homage of a tranquil mind, a trusting nature, and an overflowing heart; so that the smoke from this poor chimney has gone upward with a better fragrance than the richest incense⁸⁴ that is burnt before the richest shrines in all the gaudy temples of this world!—Upon your own hearth; in its quiet sanctuary;⁸⁵ surrounded by its gentle influences and associations; hear her! Hear me! Hear everything that speaks the language of your hearth and home!"

"And pleads for her?" inquired the Carrier.

"All things that speak the language of your hearth and home *must* plead for her!" returned the Cricket. "For they speak the truth."

And while the Carrier, with his head upon his hands, continued to sit meditating in his chair, the presence stood beside him; suggesting his reflections by its power, and presenting them before him, as in

a glass or picture. It was not a solitary presence. From the hearth-stone, from the chimney; from the clock, the pipe, the kettle, and the cradle; from the floor, the walls, the ceiling, and the stairs; from the cart without, and the cupboard within, and the household implements; from every thing and every place with which she had ever been familiar, and with which she had ever entwined one recollection of herself in her unhappy husband's mind; fairies came trooping forth. Not to stand beside him as the Cricket did, but to busy and bestir themselves. To do all honor to her image. To pull him by the skirts, and point to it when it appeared. To cluster round it, and embrace it, and strew flowers for it to tread on. To try to crown its fair head with their tiny hands. To show that they were fond of it and loved it; and that there was not one ugly, wicked, or accusatory creature to claim knowledge of it—none but their playful and approving selves.

His thoughts were constant to her image. It was always there.

She sat plying her needle, before the fire, and singing to herself. Such a blithe, thriving,⁸⁶ steady little Dot! The fairy figures turned upon him all at once, by one consent, with one prodigious concentrated stare; and seemed to say "Is this the light wife you are mourning for!"

There were sounds of gaiety outside: musical instruments, and noisy tongues, and laughter. A crowd of young merry-makers came pouring in; among whom were May Fielding and a score of pretty girls. Dot was the fairest of them all; as young as any of them too. They came to summon her to join their party. It was a dance. If ever little foot were made

for dancing, hers was, surely. But she laughed and shook her head, and pointed to her cookery on the fire, and her table ready spread: with an exulting defiance that rendered her more charming than she was before. And so she merrily dismissed them: nodding to her would-be partners, one by one, as they passed out, with a comical indifference, enough to make them go and drown themselves immediately if they were her admirers—and they must have been so, more or less; they couldn't help it. And yet indifference was not her character. Oh no! For presently, there came a certain Carrier to the door; and bless her, what a welcome she bestowed upon him!

Again the staring figures turned upon him all at once, and seemed to say "Is this the wife who has forsaken you!"

A shadow fell upon the mirror or the picture: call it what you will. A great shadow of the stranger, as he first stood underneath their roof; covering its surface, and blotting out all other objects. But the nimble fairies worked like bees to clear it off again; and Dot again was there. Still bright and beautiful.

Rocking her little baby in its cradle; singing to it softly; and resting her head upon a shoulder which had its counterpart in the musing figure by which the fairy Cricket stood.

The night—I mean the real night: not going by fairy clocks—was wearing now; and in this stage of the Carrier's thoughts, the moon burst out, and shone brightly in the sky. Perhaps some calm and quiet light had risen also, in his mind; and he could think more soberly of what had happened.

Although the shadow of the stranger fell at intervals upon the glass—always distinct, and big, and

thoroughly defined—it never fell so darkly as at first. Whenever it appeared, the fairies uttered a general cry of consternation, and plied their little arms and legs, with inconceivable activity, to rub it out. And whenever they got at Dot again, and showed her to him once more, bright and beautiful, they cheered in the most inspiring manner.

They never showed her, otherwise than beautiful and bright, for they were household spirits to whom falsehood is annihilation; and being so, what Dot was there for them, but the one active, beaming, pleasant little creature who had been the light and sun of the Carrier's home!

The fairies were prodigiously excited when they showed her, with the baby, gossiping among a knot of sage old matrons, and affecting to be wondrous old and matronly herself, and leaning in a staid, demure old way upon her husband's arm, attempting—she! such a bud of a little woman—to convey the idea of having abjured the vanities of the world in general, and of being the sort of person to whom it was no novelty at all to be a mother; yet in the same breath, they showed her, laughing at the Carrier for being awkward, and pulling up his shirt-collar to make him smart, and mincing⁸⁷ merrily about that very room to teach him how to dance.

They turned, and stared immensely at him when they showed her with the blind girl; for though she carried cheerfulness and animation with her, where-soever she went, she bore those influences into Caleb Plummer's home, heaped up and running over. The blind girl's love for her, and trust in her, and gratitude to her; her own good busy way of setting Bertha's thanks aside; her dexterous⁸⁸ little arts for

filling up each moment of the visit in doing something useful to the house, and really working hard while feigning to make holiday; her bountiful provision of those standing delicacies, the veal and ham-pie and the bottles of beer; her radiant little face arriving at the door, and taking leave; the wonderful expression in her whole self, from her neat foot to the crown of her head, of being a part of the establishment—a something necessary to it, which it couldn't be without; all this the fairies revelled in, and loved her for. And once again they looked upon him all at once, appealingly; and seemed to say, while some among them nestled in her dress and fondled her, "Is this the wife who has betrayed your confidence!"

More than once or twice, or thrice, in the long thoughtful night, they showed her to him sitting on her favorite seat, with her bent head, her hands clasped on her brow, her falling hair. As he had seen her last. And when they found her thus, they neither turned nor looked upon him, but gathered close round her, and comforted and kissed her: and pressed on one another to show sympathy and kindness to her: and forgot him altogether.

Thus the night passed. The moon went down; the stars grew pale; the cold day broke; the sun rose. The Carrier still sat, musing in the chimney corner. He had sat there, with his head upon his hands all night. All night the faithful Cricket had been Chirp, Chirp, Chirping on the hearth. All night he had listened to its voice. All night, the household fairies had been busy with him. All night, she had been amiable and blameless in the glass, except when that one shadow fell upon it.

He rose up when it was broad day, and washed and

dressed himself. He couldn't go about his customary cheerful avocations; he wanted spirit for them; but it mattered the less, that it was Tackleton's wedding-day, and he had arranged to make his rounds by proxy.⁸⁹ He had thought to have gone merrily to church with Dot. But such plans were at an end. It was their own wedding-day too. Ah! how little he had looked for such a close to such a year!

The Carrier expected that Tackleton would pay him an early visit; and he was right. He had not walked to and fro before his own door, many minutes, when he saw the toy-merchant coming in his chaise along the road. As the chaise drew nearer, he perceived that Tackleton was dressed out sprucely, for his marriage: and had decorated his horse's head with flowers and favors.

The horse looked much more like a Bridegroom than Tackleton: whose half-closed eye was more disagreeably expressive than ever. But the Carrier took little heed of this. His thoughts had other occupation.

"John Peerybingle!" said Tackleton, with an air of condolence. "My good fellow, how do you find yourself this morning?"

"I have had but a poor night, Master Tackleton," returned the Carrier, shaking his head: "for I have been a good deal disturbed in my mind. But it's over now! Can you spare me half-an-hour or so, for some private talk?"

"I came on purpose," returned Tackleton, alighting. "Never mind the horse. He'll stand quiet enough, with the reins over this post, if you'll give him a mouthful of hay."

The Carrier having brought it from his stable and set it before him, they turned into the house.

"You are not married before noon?" he said, "I think?"

"No," answered Tackleton. "Plenty of time. Plenty of time."

When they entered the kitchen, Tilly Slowboy was rapping at the stranger's door; which was only removed from it by a few steps. One of her very red eyes (for Tilly had been crying all night long, because her mistress cried) was at the keyhole; and she was knocking very loud; and seemed frightened.

"If you please I can't make nobody hear," said Tilly looking round. "I hope nobody an't gone and been and died if you please!"

This philanthropic⁹⁰ wish, Miss Slowboy emphasized with various new raps and kicks at the door; which led to no result whatever.

"Shall I go?" said Tackleton. "It's curious."

The Carrier, who had turned his face from the door, signed to him to go if he would.

So Tackleton went to Tilly Slowboy's relief; and he too kicked and knocked; and he too failed to get the least reply. But he thought of trying the handle of the door; and as it opened easily, he peeped in, looked in, went in; and soon came running out again.

"John Peerybingle," said Tackleton, in his ear. "I hope there has been nothing—nothing rash in the night."

The Carrier turned upon him quickly.

"Because he's gone!" said Tackleton; "and the window's open. I don't see any marks—to be sure it's almost on a level with the garden: but I was afraid there might have been some—some scuffle. Eh?"

He nearly shut up the expressive eye altogether; he looked at him so hard. And he gave his eye, and his

face, and his whole person, a sharp twist. As if he would have screwed the truth out of him.

"Make yourself easy," said the Carrier. "He went into that room last night, without harm in word or deed from me; and no one has entered it since. He is away of his own free will. I'd go out gladly at that door, and beg my bread from house to house, for life, if I could so change the past that he had never come. But he has come and gone. And I have done with him!"

"Oh!—Well, I think he has got off pretty easy," said Tackleton, taking a chair.

The sneer was lost upon the Carrier, who sat down too: and shaded his face with his hand, for some little time, before proceeding.

"You showed me last night," he said at length, "my wife; my wife that I love; secretly——"

"And tenderly," insinuated Tackleton.

"Conniving at that man's disguise, and giving him opportunities of meeting her alone. I think there's no sight I wouldn't have rather seen than that. I think there's no man in the world I wouldn't have rather had to show it me."

"I confess to having had my suspicions always," said Tackleton. "And that has made me objectionable here, I know."

"But as you did show it me," pursued the Carrier, not minding him; "and as you saw her; my wife; my wife that I love"—his voice, and eye, and hand, grew steadier and firmer as he repeated these words: evidently in pursuance of a steadfast purpose—"as you saw her at this disadvantage, it is right and just that you should also see with my eyes, and look into my breast, and know what my mind is, upon the subject.

For it's settled," said the Carrier, regarding him attentively. "And nothing can shake it now."

Tackleton muttered a few general words of assent, about its being necessary to vindicate something or other; but he was overawed by the manner of his companion. Plain and unpolished as it was, it had a something dignified and noble in it, which nothing but the soul of generous honor, dwelling in the man, could have imparted.

"I am a plain, rough man," pursued the Carrier, "with very little to recommend me. I am not a clever man, as you very well know. I am not a young man. I loved my little Dot, because I had seen her grow up, from a child, in her father's house; because I knew how precious she was; because she had been my life, for years and years. There's many men I can't compare with, who never could have loved my little Dot like me, I think!"

He paused, and softly beat the ground a short time with his foot, before resuming:

"I often thought that though I wasn't good enough for her, I should make her a kind husband, and perhaps know her value better than another; and in this way I reconciled it to myself, and came to think it might be possible that we should be married. And in the end it came about, and we *were* married."

"Hah!" said Tackleton, with a significant shake of his head.

"I had studied myself; I had had experience of myself; I knew how much I loved her, and how happy I should be," pursued the Carrier. "But I had not—I feel it now—sufficiently considered her."

"To be sure," said Tackleton. "Giddiness, frivolity,

fickleness, love of admiration! Not considered! All left out of sight! Hah!"

"You had best not interrupt me," said the Carrier, with some sternness, "till you understand me; and you're wide of doing so. If, yesterday, I'd have struck that man down at a blow, who dared to breathe a word against her; to-day I'd set my foot upon his face, if he was my brother!"

The toy-merchant gazed at him in astonishment. He went on in a softer tone:

"Did I consider," said the Carrier, "that I took her; at her age, and with her beauty; from her young companions, and the many scenes of which she was the ornament; in which she was the brightest little star that ever shone; to shut her up from day to day in my dull house, and keep my tedious company? Did I consider how little suited I was to her sprightly humor, and how wearisome a plodding man like me must be, to one of her quick spirit; did I consider that it was no merit in me, or claim in me, that I loved her when everybody must, who knew her? Never. I took advantage of her hopeful nature and her cheerful disposition; and I married her. I wish I never had! For her sake; not for mine!"

The toy-merchant gazed at him, without winking. Even the half-shut eye was open now.

"Heaven bless her!" said the Carrier, "for the cheerful constancy with which she tried to keep the knowledge of this from me! And Heaven help me, that, in my slow mind, I have not found it out before! Poor child! Poor Dot! I not to find it out, who have seen her eyes fill with tears, when such a marriage as our own was spoken of! I who have seen the secret trembling on her lips a hundred times, and never

suspected it, till last night! Poor girl! That I could ever hope she would be fond of me! That I could ever believe she was!"

"She made a show of it," said Tackleton. "She made such a show of it, that to tell you the truth it was the origin of my misgivings."

And here he asserted the superiority of May Fielding, who certainly made no sort of show of being fond of *him*.

"She has tried," said the poor Carrier, with greater emotion than he had exhibited yet; "I only now begin to know how hard she has tried; to be my dutiful and zealous⁹¹ wife. How good she has been; how much she has done; how brave and strong a heart she has; let the happiness I have known under this roof bear witness! It will be some help and comfort to me when I am here alone."

"Here alone?" said Tackleton. "Oh! Then you do mean to take some notice of this?"

"I mean," returned the Carrier, "to do her the greatest kindness, and make her the best reparation,⁹² in my power. I can release her from the pain daily of an unequal marriage, and the struggle to conceal it. She shall be as free as I can render her."

"Make *her* reparation!" exclaimed Tackleton, twisting and turning his great ears with his hands. "There must be something wrong here. You didn't say that, of course."

The Carrier set his grip upon the collar of the toy-merchant, and shook him like a reed.⁹³

"Listen to me!" he said. "And take care that you hear me right. Listen to me. Do I speak plainly?"

"Very plainly indeed," answered Tackleton.

"As if I meant it?"

"Very much as if you meant it."

"I sat upon that hearth, last night, all night," exclaimed the Carrier. "On the spot where she has often sat beside me, with her sweet face looking into mine. I called up her whole life, day by day; I had her dear self, in its every passage, in review before me. And upon my soul she is innocent, if there is One to judge the innocent and the guilty!"

Staunch⁹⁴ Cricket on the hearth! royal household fairies!

"Passion and distrust have left me!" said the Carrier; "and nothing but my grief remains. In an unhappy moment some old lover, better suited to her tastes and years than I; forsaken, perhaps, for me, against her will; returned. In an unhappy moment: taken by surprise, and wanting time to think of what she did: she made herself a party to his treachery, by concealing it. Last night she saw him in the interview we witnessed. It was wrong. But otherwise than this, she is innocent if there is truth on earth!"

"If that is your opinion——" Tackleton began.

"So, let her go!" pursued the Carrier. "Go, with my blessing for the many happy hours she has given me, and my forgiveness for any pang she has caused me. Let her go, and have the peace of mind I wish her! She'll never hate me. She'll learn to like me better, when I'm not a drag upon her, and she wears the chain I have riveted, more lightly. This is the day on which I took her, with so little thought for her enjoyment, from her home. To-day she will return to it; and I will trouble her no more. Her father and mother will be here to-day—we had made a little plan for keeping it together—and they shall take her home. I can trust her, there, or anywhere.

She leaves me without blame, and she will live so I am sure. If I should die—I may perhaps while she is still young; I have lost some courage in a few hours—she'll find that I remembered her, and loved her to the last! This is the end of what you showed me. Now, it's over!"

"Oh no, John, not over. Do not say it's over yet! Not quite yet. I have heard your noble words. I could not steal away, pretending to be ignorant of what has affected me with such deep gratitude. Do not say it's over till the clock has struck again!"

She had entered shortly after Tackleton; and had remained there. She never looked at Tackleton, but fixed her eyes upon her husband. But she kept away from him, setting as wide a space as possible between them; and though she spoke with most impassioned earnestness, she went no nearer to him even then. How different in this, from her old self!

"No hand can make the clock which will strike again for me the hours that are gone," replied the Carrier, with a faint smile. "But let it be so, if you will my dear. It will strike soon. It's of little matter what we say. I'd try to please you in a harder case than that."

"Well!" muttered Tackleton. "I must be off, for when the clock strikes again, it'll be necessary for me to be upon my way to church. Good morning, John Peerybingle. I'm sorry to be deprived of the pleasure of your company. Sorry for the loss, and the occasion of it too!"

"I have spoken plainly?" said the Carrier, accompanying him to the door.

"Oh, quite!"

"And you'll remember what I have said?"

"Why, if you compel me to make the observation," said Tackleton; previously taking the precaution of getting into his chaise; "I must say that it was so very unexpected, that I'm far from being likely to forget it."

"The better for us both," returned the Carrier. "Good bye. I give you joy!"

"I wish I could give it to *you*," said Tackleton. "As I can't; thank'ee. Between ourselves (as I told you before, eh?) I don't much think I shall have the less joy in my married life, because May hasn't been too officious about me, and too demonstrative. Good bye! Take care of yourself."

The Carrier stood looking after him until he was smaller in the distance than his horse's flowers and favors near at hand; and then, with a deep sigh, went strolling like a restless, broken man, among some neighboring elms; unwilling to return until the clock was on the eve of striking.

His little wife, being left alone, sobbed piteously; but often dried her eyes and checked herself, to say how good he was, how excellent he was! and once or twice she laughed; so heartily, triumphantly, and incoherently⁹⁵ (still crying all the time), that Tilly was quite horrified.

"Ow if you please don't!" said Tilly. "It's enough to dead and bury the baby, so it is if you please."

"Will you bring him sometimes, to see his father, Tilly," inquired the mistress; drying her eyes; "when I can't live here, and have gone to my old home?"

"Ow if you please don't!" cried Tilly, throwing back her head, and bursting into a howl; she looked at the moment uncommonly like Boxer; "Ow if you please don't! Ow, what has everybody gone and been

and done with everybody, making everybody else so wretched! Ow-w-w-w!"

The soft-hearted Slowboy trailed off at this juncture,⁹⁶ into such a deplorable howl: the more tremendous from its long suppression: that she must infallibly have awakened the baby, and frightened him into something serious (probably convulsions), if her eyes had not encountered Caleb Plummer, leading in his daughter. This spectacle restoring her to a sense of the proprieties, she stood for some few moments silent, with her mouth wide open: and then posting off to the bed on which the baby lay asleep, danced in a weird, Saint Vitus⁹⁷ manner on the floor, and at the same time rummaged with her face and head among the bedclothes: apparently deriving much relief from those extraordinary operations.

"Mary!" said Bertha. "Not at the marriage!"

"I told her you would not be there, Mum," whispered Caleb. "I heard as much last night. But bless you," said the little man, taking her tenderly by both hands, "*I* don't care for what they say; *I* don't believe them. There an't much of me but that little should be torn to pieces sooner than I'd trust a word against you!"

He put his arms about her neck and hugged her, as a child might have hugged one of his own dolls.

"Bertha couldn't stay at home this morning," said Caleb. "She was afraid, I know, to hear the bells ring: and couldn't trust herself to be so near them on their wedding-day. So we started in good time, and came here. I have been thinking of what I have done," said Caleb, after a moment's pause; "I have been blaming myself till I hardly knew what to do or where to turn, for the distress of mind I have caused

her ; and I have come to the conclusion that I'd better, if you'll stay with me, Mum, the while, tell her the truth. You'll stay with me the while?" he inquired, trembling from head to foot, "I don't know what effect it may have upon her ; I don't know what she'll think of me ; I don't know that she'll ever care for her poor father afterwards. But it's best for her that she should be undeceived ; and I must bear the consequences as I deserve !"

"Mary," said Bertha, "where is your hand ! Ah ! Here it is ; here it is !" pressing it to her lips, with a smile, and drawing it through her arm. "I heard them speaking softly among themselves, last night, of some blame against you. They were wrong."

The Carrier's wife was silent. Caleb answered for her.

"They were wrong," he said.

"I knew it !" cried Bertha, proudly. "I told them so. I scorned to hear a word ! Blame *her* with justice !" she pressed the hand between her own, and the soft cheek against her face. "No ! I am not so blind as that."

Her father went on one side of her, while Dot, remained upon the other, holding her hand.

"I know you all," said Bertha, "better than you think. But none so well as her. Not even you father. There is nothing half so real and so true about me, as she is. If I could be restored to sight this instant, and not a word were spoken, I could choose her from a crowd ! My sister !"

"Bertha, my dear !" said Caleb, "I have something on my mind I want to tell you, while we three are alone. Hear me kindly ! I have a confession to make to you, my darling."

"A confession, father?"

"I have wandered from the truth and lost myself, my child," said Caleb, with a pitiable expression in his bewildered face. "I have wandered from the truth, intending to be kind to you; and have been cruel."

She turned her wonder-stricken face towards him, and repeated "Cruel!"

"He accuses himself too strongly, Bertha," said Dot. "You'll say so, presently. You'll be the first to tell him so."

"He cruel to me!" cried Bertha, with a smile of incredulity.⁹⁸

"Not meaning it, my child," said Caleb. "But I have been; though I never suspected it, till yesterday. My dear blind daughter, hear me and forgive me! The world you live in, heart of mine, doesn't exist as I have represented it. The eyes you have trusted in, have been false to you."

She turned her wonder-stricken face towards him still; but drew back, and clung closer to her friend.

"Your road in life was rough, my poor one," said Caleb, "and I meant to smooth it for you. I have altered objects, changed the characters of people, invented many things that never have been, to make you happier. I have had concealments from you, put deceptions on you, God forgive me! and surrounded you with fancies."

"But living people are not fancies?" she said hurriedly and turning very pale, and still retiring from him. "You can't change them."

"I have done so, Bertha," pleaded Caleb. "There is one person that you know, my dove——"

"Oh father! why do you say, I know?" she answered, in a tone of keen reproach. "What and whom

do *I* know! I who have no leader! I so miserably blind!"

In the anguish of her heart, she stretched out her hands, as if she were groping her way; then spread them, in a manner most forlorn and sad, upon her face.

"The marriage that takes place to-day," said Caleb, "is with a stern, sordid,⁹⁹ grinding man. A hard master to you and me, my dear, for many years. Ugly in his looks, and in his nature. Cold and callous¹⁰⁰ always. Unlike what I have painted him to you in everything, my child. In everything."

"Oh why," cried the Blind Girl, tortured, as it seemed, almost beyond endurance, "why did you ever do this! Why did you ever fill my heart so full, and then come in like death, and tear away the objects of my love! Oh Heaven, how blind I am! How helpless and alone!"

Her afflicted father hung his head, and offered no reply but in his penitence and sorrow.

She had been but a short time in this passion of regret, when the Cricket on the hearth, unheard¹⁰¹ by all but her, began to chirp. Not merrily, but in a low, faint, sorrowing way. It was so mournful, that her tears began to flow; and when the presence which had been beside the Carrier all night, appeared behind her, pointing to her father, they fell down like rain.

She heard the Cricket-voice more plainly soon; and was conscious, through her blindness, of the presence hovering about her father.

"Mary," said the Blind Girl, "tell me what my home is. What it truly is."

"It is a poor place, Bertha; very poor and bare indeed. The house will scarcely keep out wind and rain

another winter. It is as roughly shielded from the weather, Bertha," Dot continued in a low, clear voice, "as your poor father in his sackcloth coat."

The blind girl, greatly agitated, rose, and led the Carrier's little wife aside.

"Those presents that I took such care of; that came almost at my wish, and were so dearly welcome to me," she said, trembling; "where did they come from! Did you send them?"

"No."

"Who then?"

Dot saw that she knew, already; and was silent. The blind girl spread her hands before her face again. But in quite another manner now.

"Dear Mary, a moment. One moment! More this way. Speak softly to me. You are true, I know. You'd not deceive me now; would you?"

"No, Bertha, indeed!"

"No, I am sure you would not. You have too much pity for me. Mary look across the room to where we were just now; to where my father is—my father, so compassionate and loving to me—and tell me what you see."

"I see," said Dot, who understood her well; "an old man sitting in a chair, and leaning sorrowfully on the back, with his face resting on his hand. As if his child should comfort him, Bertha."

"Yes, yes. She will. Go on."

"He is an old man, worn with care and work. He is a spare, dejected, thoughtful, grey-haired man. I see him now, despondent and bowed down, and striving against nothing. But, Bertha, I have seen him many times before; and striving hard in many ways

for one great sacred object. And I honor his grey head, and bless him!"

The blind girl broke away from her; and throwing herself upon her knees before him, took the grey head to her breast.

"It is my sight restored. It is my sight!" she cried. "I have been blind, and now my eyes are open. I never knew him! To think I might have died, and never truly seen the father, who has been so loving to me!"

There were no words for Caleb's emotion.

"There is not a gallant figure on this earth," exclaimed the blind girl, holding him in her embrace, "that I would love so dearly, and would cherish so devotedly, as this! The greyer, and more worn, the dearer, father! Never let them say I am blind again. There's not a furrow in his face, there's not a hair upon his head, that shall be forgotten in my prayers and thanks to Heaven!"

Caleb managed to articulate "My Bertha!"

"And in my blindness I believed him," said the girl, caressing him with tears of exquisite affection, "to be so different! And having him beside me, day by day, so mindful of me always, never dreamed of this!"

"The fresh smart father in the blue coat, Bertha," said poor Caleb. "He's gone!"

"Nothing is gone," she answered. "Dearest father, no! Everything is here—in you. The father that I loved so well; the father that I never loved enough, and never knew; the benefactor whom I first began to reverence and love, because he had such sympathy for me; all are here in you. Nothing is dead to me. The soul of all that was most dear to me is here—

here, with the worn face, and the grey head. And I am NOT blind, father, any longer!"

Dot's whole attention had been concentrated, during this discourse, upon the father and daughter; but looking, now, towards the little Haymaker in the Moorish meadow, she saw that the clock was within a few minutes of striking; and fell, immediately, into a nervous and excited state.

"Father," said Bertha, hesitating. "Mary."

"Yes, my dear," returned Caleb. "Here she is."

"There is no change in *her*. You never told me anything of *her* that was not true?"

"I should have done it, my dear, I am afraid," returned Caleb, "if I could have made her better than she was. But I must have changed her for the worse, if I had changed her at all. Nothing could improve her, Bertha."

Confident as the blind girl had been when she asked the question, her delight and pride in the reply and her renewed embrace of Dot, were charming to behold.

"More changes than you think for, may happen though, my dear," said Dot. "Changes for the better, I mean; changes for great joy to some of us. You mustn't let them startle you too much, if any such should ever happen, and affect you. Are those wheels upon the road? You've a quick ear, Bertha. Are they wheels?"

"Yes. Coming very fast."

"I—I—I know you have a quick ear," said Dot, placing her hand upon her heart, and evidently talking on, as fast as she could, to hide its palpitating¹⁰² state, "because I have noticed it often, and because you were so quick to find out that strange step last night.

Though why you should have said, as I well recollect you did say, Bertha, 'Whose step is that!' and why you should have taken any greater observation of it than of any other step, I don't know. Though as I said just now, there are great changes in the world: great changes: and we can't do better than prepare ourselves to be surprised at hardly anything."

Caleb wondered what this meant; perceiving that she spoke to him, no less than to his daughter. He saw her, with astonishment, so fluttered and distressed that she could scarcely breathe; and holding to a chair, to save herself from falling.

"They are wheels indeed!" she panted. "Coming nearer! Nearer! Very close! And now you hear them stopping at the garden-gate! And now you hear a step outside the door—the same step, Bertha, is it not!—and now!—"

She utter a wild cry of uncontrollable delight; and running up to Caleb put her hands upon his eyes, as a young man rushed into the room, and flinging away his hat into the air, came sweeping down upon them.

"Is it over?" cried Dot.

"Yes!"

"Happily over?"

"Yes!"

"Do you recollect the voice, dear Caleb? Did you ever hear the like of it before?" cried Dot.

"If my boy in the golden South Americas was alive"—said Caleb, trembling.

"He is alive!" shrieked Dot, removing her hands from his eyes, and clapping them in ecstasy;¹⁰³ "look at him! See where he stands before you, healthy and strong! Your own dear son! Your own dear living, loving brother, Bertha!"

All honor to the little creature for her transports!¹⁰⁴ All honor to her tears and laughter, when the three were locked in one another's arms! All honor to the heartiness with which she met the sun-burnt sailor-fellow, with his dark streaming hair, half way, and never turned her rosy little mouth aside, but suffered him to kiss it, freely, and to press her to his bounding heart!

And honor to the Cuckoo too—why not!—for bursting out of the trap-door in the Moorish Palace like a house-breaker, and hiccupping twelve times on the assembled company, as if he had got drunk for joy!

The Carrier, entering, started back: and well he might: to find himself in such good company.

“Look, John!” said Caleb, exultingly, “look here! My own boy from the golden South Americas! My own son! Him that you fitted out, and sent away yourself; him that you were always such a friend to!”

The Carrier advanced to seize him by the hand; but recoiling, as some feature in his face awakened a remembrance of the deaf man in the cart, said: “Edward! Was it you?”

“Now tell him all!” cried Dot. “Tell him all, Edward; and don't spare me, for nothing shall make me spare myself in his eyes, ever again.”

“I was the man,” said Edward.

“And could you steal, disguised, into the house of your old friend?” rejoined the Carrier. “There was a frank boy once—how many years is it, Caleb, since we heard that he was dead, and had it proved, we thought?—who never would have done that.”

“There was a generous friend of mine, once: more a father to me than a friend,” said Edward, “Who

never would have judged me, or any other man, unheard. You were he. So I am certain you will hear me now."

The Carrier, with a troubled glance at Dot, who still kept far away from him, replied "Well! that's but fair. I will."

"You must know that when I left here, a boy," said Edward, "I was in love: and my love was returned. She was a very young girl, who perhaps (you may tell me) didn't know her own mind. But I knew mine; and I had a passion for her."

"You had!" exclaimed the Carrier. "You!"

"Indeed I had," returned the other. "And she returned it. I have ever since believed she did; and now I am sure she did."

"Heaven help me!" said the Carrier. "This is worse than all."

"Constant to her," said Edward, "and returning, full of hope, after many hardships and perils, to redeem my part of our old contract, I heard, twenty miles away, that she was false to me; that she had forgotten me; and had bestowed herself upon another and a richer man. I had no mind to reproach her; but I wished to see her, and to prove beyond dispute that this was true. I hoped she might have been forced into it, against her own desire and recollection. It would be small comfort, but it would be some, I thought: and on I came. That I might have the truth, the real truth; observing freely for myself, and judging for myself, without obstruction on the one hand, or presenting my own influence (if I had any) before her, on the other; I dressed myself unlike myself—you know how; and waited on the road—you know where. You had no suspicion of me; neither had—

had she," pointing to Dot, "until I whispered in her ear at that fireside, and she so nearly betrayed me."

"But when she knew that Edward was alive, and had come back," sobbed Dot, now speaking for herself, as she had burned to do, all through this narrative; "and when she knew his purpose, she advised him by all means to keep his secret close; for his old friend John Peerybingle was much too open in his nature, and too clumsy in all artifice¹⁰⁵—being a clumsy man in general," said Dot, half laughing and half crying—"to keep it for him. And when she—that's me, John," sobbed the little woman—"told him all, and how his sweetheart had believed him to be dead; and how she had at last been over-persuaded by her mother into a marriage which the silly, dear old thing called advantageous; and when she—that's me again, John—told him they were not yet married (though close upon it), and that it would be nothing but a sacrifice if it went on, for there was no love on her side; and when he went nearly mad with joy to hear it; then she—that's me again—said she would go between them, as she had often done before in old times, John, and would sound his sweetheart and be sure that what she—me again, John—said and thought was right. And it was right, John! And they were brought together, John! And they were married, John, an hour ago. And here's the bride! And Gruff and Tackleton may die a bachelor! And I'm a happy little woman, May, God bless you!"

She was an irresistible little woman, if that be anything to the purpose; and never so completely irresistible as in her present transports. There never were congratulations so endearing and delicious, as those she lavished on herself and on the bride.

Amid the tumult of emotions in his breast, the honest Carrier had stood, confounded. Flying, now, towards her, Dot stretched out her hand to stop him, and retreated as before.

"No, John, no! Hear all! Don't love me any more, John, till you've heard every word I have to say. It was wrong to have a secret from you, John. I'm very sorry. I didn't think it any harm, till I came and sat down by you on the little stool last night; but when I knew by what was written in your face, that you had seen me walking in the gallery with Edward, and knew what you thought; I felt how giddy and how wrong it was. But oh, dear John, how could you, could you, think so!"

Little woman, how she sobbed again! John Peery-bingle would have caught her in his arms. But no; she wouldn't let him.

"Don't love me yet, please, John! Not for a long time yet! When I was sad about this intended marriage, dear, it was because I remembered May and Edward such young lovers; and knew that her heart was far away from Tackleton. You believe that, now. Don't you, John?"

John was going to make another rush at this appeal; but she stopped him again.

"No; keep there, please, John! When I laugh at you, as I sometimes do, John; and call you clumsy, and a dear old goose, and names of that sort, it's because I love you, John, so well; and take such pleasure in your ways; and wouldn't see you altered in the least respect to have you made a king to-morrow."

"Hooroar!" said Caleb with unusual vigor. "My opinion!"

"And when I speak of people being middle-aged,

and steady, John, and pretend that we are a hundrum couple, going on in a jog-trot sort of way, it's only because I'm such a silly little thing, John, that I like, sometimes, to act a kind of play with baby, and all that: and make believe."

She saw that he was coming; and stopped him again. But she was very nearly too late.

"No, don't love me for another minute or two, if you please, John! What I want most to tell you, I have kept to the last. My dear, good, generous John; when we were talking the other night about the Cricket, I had it on my lips to say, that at first I did not love you quite so dearly as I do now; that when I first came home here, I was half afraid I mightn't learn to love you every bit as well as I hoped and prayed I might—being so very young, John. But, dear John, every day and hour, I loved you more and more. And if I could have loved you better than I do, the noble words I heard you say this morning, would have made me. But I can't. All the affection that I had (it was a great deal, John) I gave you, as you well deserve, long, long ago, and I have no more left to give. Now, my dear husband, take me to your heart again! That's my home, John; and never, never think of sending me to any other!"

You never will derive so much delight from seeing a glorious little woman in the arms of a third party, as you would have felt if you had seen Dot run into the Carrier's embrace. It was the most complete, unmitigated,¹⁰⁶ soul-fraught little piece of earnestness that ever you beheld in all your days.

You may be sure the Carrier was in a state of perfect rapture; and you may be sure Dot was likewise; and you may be sure they all were, inclusive of Miss

Slowboy, who cried copiously for joy, and, wishing to include her young charge in the general interchange of congratulations, handed round the Baby to everybody in succession, as if it were something to drink.

But now the sound of wheels was heard again outside the door; and somebody exclaimed that Gruff and Tackleton was coming back. Speedily that worthy gentleman appeared: looking warm and flustered.

"Why, what the Devil's this, John Peerybingle!" said Tackleton. "There's some mistake. I appointed Mrs. Tackleton to meet me at the church; and I'll swear I passed her on the road, on her way here. Oh! here she is! I beg your pardon, Sir; I haven't the pleasure of knowing you; but if you can do me the favor to spare this young lady, she has rather a particular engagement this morning."

"But I can't spare her," returned Edward. "I couldn't think of it."

"What do you mean, you vagabond?" said Tackleton.

"I mean, that as I can make allowance for your being vexed," returned the other, with a smile, "I am as deaf to harsh discourse this morning, as I was to all discourse last night."

The look that Tackleton bestowed upon him, and the start he gave!

"I am sorry, Sir," said Edward, holding out May's left hand, and especially the third finger; "that the young lady can't accompany you to church; but as she has been there once, this morning, perhaps you'll excuse her."

Tackleton looked hard at the third finger; and took

a little piece of silver paper, apparently containing a ring, from his waistcoat pocket.

"Miss Slowboy," said Tackleton. "Will you have the kindness to throw that in the fire? Thank'ee."

"It was a previous engagement: quite an old engagement: that prevented my wife from keeping her appointment with you, I assure you," said Edward.

"Mr. Tackleton will do me the justice to acknowledge that I revealed it to him faithfully; and that I told him many times, I never could forget it," said May, blushing.

"Oh certainly!" said Tackleton. "Oh to be sure. Oh it's all right. It's quite correct. Mrs. Edward Plummer, I infer?"

"That's the name," returned the bridegroom.

"Ah, I shouldn't have known you, Sir," said Tackleton, scrutinizing his face narrowly, and making a low bow. "I give you joy, Sir!"

"Thank'ee."

"Mrs. Peerybingle," said Tackleton, turning suddenly to where she stood with her husband; "I am sorry. You haven't done me a very great kindness, but, upon my life I am sorry. You are better than I thought you. John Peerybingle, I am sorry. You understand me; that's enough. It's quite correct, ladies and gentlemen all, and perfectly satisfactory. Good morning!"

With these words he carried it off, and carried himself off too: merely stopping at the door, to take the flowers and favors from his horse's head, and to kick that animal once in the ribs, as a means of informing him that there was a screw loose in his arrangements.

Of course it became a serious duty now, to make

such a day of it, as should mark these events for a high feast and festival in the Peerybingle calendar for evermore. Accordingly, Dot went to work to produce such an entertainment, as should reflect undying honor on the house and every one concerned; and in a very short space of time, she was up to her dimpled elbows in flour, and whitening the Carrier's coat, every time he came near her, by stopping him to give him a kiss. That good fellow washed the greens, and peeled the turnips, and broke the plates, and upset iron pots full of cold water on the fire, and made himself useful in all sorts of ways: while a couple of professional assistants, hastily called in from somewhere in the neighborhood, as on a point of life or death, ran against each other in all the doorways and round all the corners; and everybody tumbled over Tilly Slowboy and the baby, everywhere. Tilly never came out in such force before. Her ubiquity¹⁰⁷ was the theme of general admiration. She was a stumbling-block in the passage at five-and-twenty minutes past two; a man-trap in the kitchen at half-past two precisely; and a pitfall in the garret at five-and-twenty minutes to three. The baby's head was, as it were, a test and touchstone for every description of matter,¹⁰⁸ animal, vegetable, and mineral. Nothing was in use that day that didn't come, at some time or other, into close acquaintance with it.

Then, there was a great expedition set on foot to go and find out Mrs. Fielding; and to be dismally penitent to that excellent gentlewoman; and to bring her back, by force if needful, to be happy and forgiving. And when the expedition first discovered her, she would listen to no terms at all, but said, an unspeakable number of times, that ever she should

have lived to see the day! and couldn't be got to say anything else, except "Now carry me to the grave;" which seemed absurd, on account of her not being dead, or anything at all like it. After a time, she lapsed into a state of dreadful calmness, and observed, that when that unfortunate train of circumstances had occurred in the Indigo Trade, she had foreseen that she would be exposed, during her whole life, to every species of insult and contumely;¹⁰⁹ and that she was glad to find it was the case; and begged they wouldn't trouble themselves about her,—for what was she? oh, dear! a nobody!—but would forget that such a being lived, and would take their course in life without her. From this bitterly sarcastic mood, she passed into an angry one, in which she gave vent to the remarkable expression that the worm would turn if trodden on; and after that, she yielded to a soft regret, and said, if they had only given her their confidence, what might she not have had it in her power to suggest! Taking advantage of this crisis in her feelings, the expedition embraced her; and she very soon had her gloves on, and was on her way to John Peerybingle's in a state of unimpeachable gentility; with a paper parcel at her side containing a cap of state, almost as tall, and quite as stiff, as a mitre.¹¹⁰

Then, there were Dot's father and mother to come, in another little chaise; and they were behind their time; and fears were entertained; and there was much looking out for them down the road; and Mrs. Fielding always would look in the wrong and morally impossible direction; and being apprised thereof, hoped she might take the liberty of looking where she pleased. At last they came: a chubby little couple, jogging along in a snug and comfortable little way

that quite belonged to the Dot family: and Dot and her mother, side by side, were wonderful to see. They were so like each other.

Then Dot's mother had to renew her acquaintance with May's mother; and May's mother always stood on her gentility; and Dot's mother never stood on anything but her active little feet. And old Dot: so to call Dot's father, I forgot it wasn't his right name, but never mind: took liberties, and shook hands at first sight, and seemed to think a cap but so much starch and muslin, and didn't defer himself at all to the Indigo Trade, but said there was no help for it now; and, in Mrs. Fielding's summing up, was a good-natured kind of man—but coarse, my dear.

I wouldn't have missed Dot, doing the honors in her wedding-gown: my benison¹¹¹ on her bright face! for any money. No! nor the good Carrier, so jovial and so ruddy, at the bottom of the table. Nor the brown, fresh sailor-fellow, and his handsome wife. Nor any one among them. To have missed the dinner would have been to miss as jolly and as stout a meal as man need eat; and to have missed the overflowing cups in which they drank The Wedding-Day, would have been the greatest miss of all.

After dinner, Caleb sang the song about the Sparkling Bowl! As I'm a living man: hoping to keep so, for a year or two: he sang it through.

And, by the bye, a most unlooked-for incident occurred, just as he finished the last verse.

There was a tap at the door; and a man came staggering in, without saying with your leave, or by your leave, with something heavy on his head. Setting this down in the middle of the table, symmetrically in the centre of the nuts and apples, he said:

"Mr. Tackleton's compliments, and as he hasn't got no use for the cake himself, p'raps you'll eat it."

And with those words, he walked off.

There was some surprise among the company, as you may imagine. Mrs. Fielding, being a lady of infinite discernment, suggested that the cake was poisoned, and related a narrative of a cake, which, within her knowledge, had turned a seminary for young ladies, blue. But she was overruled by acclamation; and the cake was cut by May, with much ceremony and rejoicing.

I don't think any one had tasted it, when there came another tap at the door, and the same man appeared again, having under his arm a vast brown-paper parcel.

"Mr. Tackleton's compliments, and he's sent a few toys for the baby. They an't ugly."

After the delivery of which expressions, he retired again.

The whole party would have experienced great difficulty in finding words for their astonishment, even if they had had ample time to seek them. But they had none at all; for the messenger had scarcely shut the door behind him, when there came another tap, and Tackleton himself walked in.

"Mrs. Peerybingle!" said the toy-merchant, hat in hand. "I'm sorry. I'm more sorry than I was this morning. I have had time to think of it. John Peerybingle! I'm sour by disposition; but I can't help being sweetened, more or less, by coming face to face with such a man as you. Caleb! This unconscious little nurse gave me a broken hint last night, of which I have found the thread. I blush to think how easily I might have bound you and your daughter to

me; and what a miserable idiot I was, when I took her for one! Friends, one and all, my house is very lonely to-night. I have not so much as a Cricket on my hearth. I have scared them all away. Be gracious to me; let me join this happy party!"

He was at home in five minutes. You never saw such a fellow. What *had* he been doing with himself all his life, never to have known, before, his great capacity of being jovial! Or what had the fairies been doing with him, to have effected such a change!

"John! you won't send me home this evening; will you?" whispered Dot.

He had been very near it though!

There wanted but one living creature to make the party complete; and, in the twinkling of an eye, there he was: very thirsty with hard running, and engaged in hopeless endeavors to squeeze his head into a narrow pitcher. He had gone with the cart to its journey's end, very much disgusted with the absence of his master, and stupendously rebellious to the deputy. After lingering about the stable for some little time, vainly attempting to incite the old horse to the mutinous act of returning on his own account, he had walked into the tap-room and laid himself down before the fire. But suddenly yielding to the conviction that the deputy was a humbug, and must be abandoned, he had got up again, turned tail, and come home.

There was a dance in the evening. With which general mention of that recreation, I should have left it alone, if I had not some reason to suppose that it was quite an original dance, and one of a most uncommon figure. It was formed in an odd way; in this way.

Edward, that sailor-fellow—a good free dashing sort of a fellow he was—had been telling them various marvels concerning parrots, and mines, and Mexicans, and gold dust, when all at once he took it in his head to jump up from his seat and propose a dance; for Bertha's harp was there, and she had such a hand upon it as you seldom hear. Dot (sly little piece of affectation when she chose) said her dancing days were over; *I* think because the Carrier was smoking his pipe, and she liked sitting by him, best. Mrs. Fielding had no choice, of course, but to say her dancing days were over after that; and everybody said the same, except May; May was ready.

So May and Edward get up, amid great applause, to dance alone; and Bertha plays her liveliest tune.

Well! if you'll believe me, they have not been dancing five minutes, when suddenly the Carrier flings his pipe away, takes Dot round the waist, dashes out into the room, and starts off with her, toe and heel, quite wonderfully. Tackleton no sooner sees this, than he skims across to Mrs. Fielding, takes her round the waist, and follows suit. Old Dot no sooner sees this, than up he is, all alive, whisks off Mrs. Dot in the middle of the dance, and is the foremost there. Caleb no sooner sees this, than he clutches Tilly Slowboy by both hands and goes off at score; Miss Slowboy, firm in the belief that diving hotly in among the other couples, and effecting any number of concussions with them, is your only principle of footing it.

Hark! how the Cricket joins the music with its Chirp, Chirp, Chirp; and how the Kettle hums!

* * * * *

But what is this! Even as I listen to them, blithely, and turn towards Dot, for one last glimpse of a little

figure very pleasant to me, she and the rest have vanished into air, and I am left alone. A Cricket sings upon the hearth; a broken child's-toy lies upon the ground; and nothing else remains.

NOTES

1. **Cricket.** The European house cricket. A brown insect about an inch and a half long. It creaks or chirps by rubbing together the rough parts of its wings.
2. **hearth.** The floor of a fireplace.
3. **Dutch clock.** Mechanical clocks have been favorite timepieces throughout Europe for centuries. They range from cheap household clocks to such masterpieces as the town clock at Munich and the cathedral clock at Strasbourg. On all of them symbolic figures perform more or less intricate movements. The mower represents Father Time whose relentless scythe reaps the human race.
4. **begin at the beginning.** A favorite jest with authors. Washington Irving began his *Knickerbocker's History of New York* with the story of Creation.
5. **pattens.** Shoesoles mounted on frames and worn to keep the feet out of the mud.
6. **first proposition.** To construct an equilateral triangle upon a given straight line.
7. **Euclid.** The "father of geometry." A Greek mathematician who lived in Alexandria during the fourth century, B. C.
8. **butt.** A large cask.
9. **rings.** Hoops on which the pattens stand.
10. **Royal George.** An English war vessel which upset and sank in 1782 with a loss of eight hundred of her crew. About the time Dickens wrote *The Cricket on the Hearth* the wreck was blown up.

The poet Cowper wrote in *Loss of The Royal George*,

Toll for the brave!
The brave who are no more!
All sunk beneath the wave
Fast by their native shore!

Eight hundred of the brave
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel
And laid her on her side.

* * * * *

It was not in the battle;
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak,
She ran upon no rock.

11. **Cases.** Pantaloon.
12. **nightingale.** A small brown and gray bird of Europe celebrated for its melodious song. It sings at night.
13. **burden.** Refrain; the part of a song which is frequently repeated.
14. **lumbago.** Pain in the small of the back.
15. **Carrier.** An expressman.
teens. *Thirteen to nineteen.*
16. **Mastiff.** An English dog of heavy build; it makes a good watch dog.
17. **matron.** A married woman.
18. **How doth the little.** Thus begins Watts's famous poem.

How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day
From every open flower.

It has been taught in schools for more than a century.

19. **Will-of-the-wisp.** A light which flits over swamps. It is supposed to be caused by the spontaneous combustion of gas from stagnant

water. Travellers who follow it may be led astray. Also called Jack o' lantern and *ignis fatuus*.

20. **hob.** See note 32, p. 109.
21. **deal.** A board.
22. **comely.** Good-looking.
23. **The Old Gentleman.** Old Nick; the Devil.
24. **Other six of the Seven Sleepers.** According to legend seven young men of Ephesus, in the third century, hid themselves in a cave to escape persecution. Their pursuers closed the entrance and they fell into a miraculous sleep which lasted 196 years. When they awoke they were as much amazed at the changes in the world as was Rip Van Winkle.
25. **sack-cloth.** Bagging.
26. **philosopher's stone.** During the middle ages alchemists and other learned men searched for a stone which would turn iron and other cheap metals into gold and which as a medicine would prolong life. Their vain search led to experiments which have benefitted mankind more than the discovery of the philosopher's stone would have done.
27. **Shems and Hams.** Shem, Ham, and Japheth were the sons of Noah.
28. **golden South Americas.** The gold brought from the land of the Incas by the Spanish conquerors lingered in the memory of Europeans long after the treasure was exhausted. There is little gold mined in South America.
29. **damage.** The cost.
30. **governor.** Boss.
31. **sow his oats.** To sow wild oats is to indulge in youthful follies.
32. **ogre.** See note 92, p. 113.
33. **vampire.** According to a superstition of Asia and eastern Europe, vampires are the ghosts of criminals. They suck the blood of living persons while they are asleep.
34. **goblin.** See note 46, p. 110.

- 35. **magic lantern.** A toy stereopticon. Pictures painted on glass slides are enlarged and thrown on a screen.
- 36. **raven.** A bird black like the crow but larger. It is regarded as an omen of ill. Read "The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe.
- 37. **clinch.** To fasten securely as when a point of a nail is bent and flattened down.
- 38. **humor.** An inclination of mind, e. g., good humor.
- 39. **honors and obeys.** The promise to "love, honor, and obey" is part of the ritual of marriage in the Church of England.
- 40. **firebox.** Matchsafe.
- 41. **genius.** See note 24, p. 109.
- 42. **tilt.** A hood which can be tilted up or down.

Chirp the Second

- 43. **barnacle.** A tiny shell fish which fastens itself to rocks, wharves, or the bottoms of ships.
- 44. **sorcerer.** A magician.
- 45. **delf.** Glazed earthenware, with blue decorations, made in Delft, Holland.
- 46. **board.** Shelf.
- 47. **stations.** English society is still divided into upper, middle, and lower classes,—the nobility, tradespeople, and laborers. Dickens was proud of his success as a self-made man. He refused to accept a title which Queen Victoria offered him.
- 48. **tinder box.** Before the invention of the match the common instrument for lighting a fire was a metal box containing charred linen or other substance called tinder which can easily be set on fire by a spark from flint and steel struck together.
- 49. **poetic license.** The right of a poet to change a customary expression in order to secure an artistic effect.
- 50. **mettle.** The stuff things are made of.

51. **alchemist.** A chemist of ancient times when science was largely superstition and the chief object of the alchemist was to discover the philosopher's stone.
52. **Lord Chamberlain.** A high official of the English court who regulates etiquette and has charge of a host of servants.
53. **Bacchanalian.** Like the boisterous Roman festivals in honor of Bacchus, the god of wine.
54. **Bedlam.** See note 12, p. 108.
55. **strait-waist-coat.** A tight jacket.
56. **muffler.** A gag to prevent screaming.
57. **for the nonce.** "For then once"; the single time.
58. **beadle.** A church officer who keeps order during the service.
59. **favours.** Ornaments, presents.
60. **spencer.** A short jacket like the overcoat designed by Lord Spencer to test the tendency to follow even an absurd style.
61. **nankeen.** Unbleached muslin.
62. **Turnpike Trust.** Roads were formerly made and kept in repair by private corporations which were given the right to charge travellers for the use of the road. Toll was collected at gates placed across the road and opened and closed by means of a pole or pike.
63. **perspective.** A distant view.
64. **Way.** Whoa.
65. **dame schools.** Private primary schools taught by women.
66. **public houses.** Hotels, inns, taverns.
67. **sage.** A wise man.
68. **fairy rings.** Circular growths of toadstools where fairies are supposed to hold their balls.
69. **Great Pyramid.** The principal pyramid in the desert at Ghizeh, near Cairo, Egypt; the burial place of the Pharaoh Cheops. It is the largest pyramid in the world.
70. **dog in the manger.** One who keeps others from something he himself cannot use or en-

joy. The expression comes from the fable of the dog which, getting into the manger, would not let the horse eat the hay although he himself did not care for it.

71. **indigo trade.** Before 1870 when indigo dye was first made from coal tar, the dye was obtained from plants which were cultivated in the tropics. Enormous fortunes were made in the indigo trade.
72. **bumper.** A glass brimful.
73. **bait.** To feed while resting.
74. **picnic.** The original use of the word applied to such feasts as the one described, where each comer contributed to the common store of provisions.
75. **dreadnaught.** A heavy outer garment.
76. **Welsh Giant** in the story of Jack the Giant-Killer.
77. **Samson.** A Hebrew hero of enormous strength.
78. **cribbage.** A game of cards. The score is kept by sticking pegs into the holes of a board, and moving them as the score increases.
79. **board.** Cribbage board.
80. **perfidious.** Faithless.
81. **blithe.** Cheerful.

Chirp the Third

82. **idol.** See note 71, p. 112.
83. **invocation.** Prayer.
84. **incense.** Spices and gums which are burned as a religious rite, the fragrance ascending as a sacrifice.
85. **sanctuary.** A holy place.
86. **thriving.** Industrious.
87. **mincing.** Walking with short steps, in an affected manner.
88. **dexterous.** (*dexter*, the right hand). Skillful, expert.
89. **proxy.** An agent; a substitute.

90. **philanthropic.** (*phil* means love, *anthropos* means man). Characterized by good-will.
91. **zealous.** Eagerly helpful, earnest.
92. **reparation.** Payment for a wrong or injury.
93. **reed.** A tall slender grasslike plant.
94. **staunch.** Steady, reliable.
95. **incoherently.** Disconnectedly.
96. **juncture.** A point of time.
97. **St. Vitus.** The patron saint of Bohemia. Peasants formerly danced before the image of the saint in the belief that the ceremony would cure disease and secure good health. Chorea, a nervous disorder characterized by twitching and other uncontrolled movements is called St. Vitus Dance.
98. **incredulity.** Unbelief.
99. **sordid.** Mean, stingy.
100. **callous.** Unfeeling.
101. **unheard.** The blind develop a keen sense of hearing. Dot says to Bertha, "You've a quick ear," page 216.
102. **palpitating.** Throbbing, fluttering.
103. **ecstasy.** Excessive feeling.
104. **transport.** (*trans* means across; *port-* means carry). Strong emotions which carry one away.
105. **artifice.** Trick.
106. **unmitigated.** Whole hearted.
107. **ubiquity.** See note 89, p. 113.
108. **matter.** The material of which the world is made is divided into three kingdoms—animal, vegetable, and mineral.
109. **contumely.** Contempt.
110. **mitre.** A tall, two-pointed head-dress worn by bishops.
111. **benison.** Blessing.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND PROJECTS

I.

1. On which day of the week does the story begin?
On what date? At what hour?
2. What sounds did Mrs. Peerybingle hear while waiting for her husband? Of what was she thinking?
3. In whose houses does the action of the story take place? Where does the climax occur?
4. What is Tackleton's definition of a home? The fairies'?
5. In what toys does a Member of Parliament deal?
A lawyer?
6. In what respect are John and Dot like Tackleton and May?
7. Mention two occasions when John shows his dislike of Tackleton.
8. After the Peerybingle family, their servant and their boarder had gone home who stayed at the dollmaker's home? What did they talk about?
9. Although it is only the first anniversary of his marriage, John tells Tackleton, "she has been my wife for years and years." Explain.
10. What crime did John Peerybingle almost commit?
What stopped him?

II.

Complete the following statements.

Do Not Mark the Book

1. The night the story begins was the — — the cricket had been heard in that house.

2. Tillie Slowboy was somewhat — — ————
——.
3. The baby had — living grand parents.
4. The servant knew that the stranger did not have
—— hair.
5. Tackleton —— animals.
6. Caleb — — —— —— the toys he made
looked natural — —.
7. It was —— for Caleb to deceive Bertha.
8. Tackleton — — invite —— — —— to his
wedding.

III.

Write statements like the following, some true and others false. Let students try to distinguish the true from the false statements.

1. Bertha regained her sight. **False.**
2. Boxer was present at the wedding party. **True.**

IV.

Rewrite each of the following statements using the word or phrase in italics which you think is most accurate.

Do Not Mark the Book

A.

1. The cottage in which John Peerybingle and his family lived stood *directly on the street, in a yard, in a wood, on a farm.*
2. There were *pine, maple, poplar, elm* trees near the cottage.
3. The cottage had *only one story, more than one story, a garret.*

4. To light their home, the Peerybingles used *lamps, gas, candles, electric light.*
5. The *kettle, cricket, dog, clock* was the mascot of their home.
6. John charged Caleb *a shilling, a half-crown, nothing, too much* for carting the box of doll's eyes.
7. It was natural for Edward to go to Peerybingle's house to board *because John had helped him go to South America, there was plenty of room there, he wanted Mrs. Peerybingle to help him, he was afraid to go home.*
8. Mrs. Peerybingle recognized the stranger *as soon as he arrived, by his step, because his wig fell off, because he told her his name.*
9. Dot did not tell her husband who the stranger was *because John could not keep a secret, John would turn him out of the house, it would make John suspicious of her, the stranger threatened her life.*
10. Edward climbed out of the window *because he was afraid of John, he wanted to go home, he had promised to meet May, he could not pay his room rent.*

B.

1. When Bertha learned that her father had deceived her she *scolded, forgave, thanked, admired* him.
2. Caleb did not deceive his daughter about *himself, Tackleton, Mrs. Peerybingle, their home.*
3. When Caleb repeated what Bertha said to the Carrier's wife ("They were wrong."), he emphasized the *first, second, third, all the* words.
4. The stranger's last name was *Peerybingle, Tackleton, Plummer, Fielding.*

5. Edward's wedding party took place *in the morning, at noon, in the afternoon, at night.*
6. When Edward showed Tackleton May's hand he saw that she wore *a glove, a bracelet, a wedding ring.*
7. When Tackleton learned that May had jilted him *he flew into a rage, became sarcastic, controlled his temper, showed no feeling whatever.*
8. John Peerybingle was willing to *forgive, divorce, punish, revenge* his wife.
9. Dot believed that *she would have to go home to her parents, John no longer loved her, John would approve everything she had done, she had made a serious mistake in not trusting John with Edward's secret.*
10. The moral of *The Cricket on The Hearth* is *that one should not deceive the blind; that an uneducated person can have a high sense of honor; that bad luck reforms the wicked.*

V.

1. Indicate the beginning and end of the following sub-divisions of *Chirp The First*.
 1. Introduction.
 2. John and His Household.
 3. The Packages.
 4. The Stranger.
 5. The Toymaker.
 6. Mr. Tackleton.
 7. The Mystery.
2. Make a topical analysis of *Chirp The Second*, and of *Chirp The Third*.

3. Prepare a time schedule of the story. Show the time each Chirp or chapter begins and ends.
4. Prepare a statement which shows what each character is doing during the intervals between the chapters.
5. Group the characters of the story by families.
6. Arrange in verse form the "Song of the Kettle."
7. Arrange in the form of a table, the Contests mentioned in the story.

Conflict	Rivals	Conclusion	Winner
Musical Etc.	Kettle— Cricket	Kettle boils over	Cricket

8. Mention a double negative which Tillie Slowboy uses. Correct it.
9. Select the passages which Dickens introduces to mislead the reader as to the outcome of the story.
10. Choose selections which show :

Close observation.

Character study.

Pathos.

Humor.

Irony.

Optimism.

Chats with the reader.

WASHINGTON IRVING

WASHINGTON IRVING was the first American-born writer to attain eminence in literature. Thackeray called him the first ambassador from the New World of letters to the Old. He was born April 13, 1783 and died November 28, 1859. His life thus spanned the years from the American Revolution to the Civil War.

Irving was born in New York City when it was a town of about twenty-five thousand inhabitants, out-ranked by Philadelphia in population and by Boston in culture and commercial importance. His father, a Scotch immigrant, kept a hardware store. As a boy Irving preferred to loiter about the wharves rather than to go to school; he liked to read such books as *Sinbad the Sailor* and *Robinson Crusoe*. Although he was admitted to the bar, he did not care for the law. For a time he lived on the street, afterwards called Irving Place in his honor.

At the age of nineteen he contributed articles to the *Morning Chronicle* and after some more experience as an author, in 1809, at the age of twenty-six he published the humorous *History of New York by Diedrich Knickerbocker*. The book with its genial humor had genuine literary merit and was praised by the English critics. Although the colonies had become politically independent of Great Britain, in matters of taste and culture they were still ruled by the mother

country. Irving would not have become popular had he not first won the approval of readers abroad.

Irving had gone into business with two of his brothers. In 1815 he went to Europe where he had previously spent four years on account of his health. When the firm failed in 1818 he turned to literature as a livelihood. He wrote *Rip Van Winkle*, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* and other parts of *The Sketch Book* and sent them to New York for serial publication during 1819. The next year they were printed as a book in New York and in England through the help of Walter Scott.

Irving remained abroad for seventeen years. In Spain he gathered materials for his *Life of Christopher Columbus*, and other works which brought him fame and fortune. He continued to be an American citizen and served the United States in diplomatic positions in Madrid and London.

He returned to the United States in 1832 and bought a Dutch cottage called Wolfert's Roost at Tarrytown on the bank of the Hudson river. Irving changed the name to Sunnyside. The house with which the name of Irving is inseparably connected is still preserved. In 1842 President Tyler appointed him minister to Spain. At the end of his term he returned to Sunnyside and devoted himself entirely to writing. The biographies of Oliver Goldsmith, Mahomet, and Washington were the work of this time. The complete edition of his writings consists of twenty-six volumes.

Irving died at Sunnyside in his seventy-sixth year. He was buried in the cemetery at Sleepy Hollow, not far from the scene which he had made so widely known.

The story of *Rip Van Winkle* was one of the first stories that Irving wrote. It is by far the most popular.

The tale of a sleeper who awakes after the lapse of years to find the world altered beyond recognition has always been a favorite subject for the writer of stories. Among the well known variants of the theme are the following:

Perrault's fairy tale of *The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood* who wounded her finger and in fulfillment of a fairy prophecy made at her birth sank with all her court into a magic sleep which lasted until a hundred years later the fairy prince awoke them all when he kissed her.

The legend that Epimenides, a poet and prophet, slept for fifty years in a cave on the island of Crete. The Greek legend of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus. The Danish tale of the national hero Holger who sleeps under the Kronberg in Helsingfors and who will aid his country in time of need; and the similar German legend of Frederick Barbarossa.

The original upon which Irving modeled his *Rip Van Winkle* is the German folk tale of the adventures of Peter Klaus, which was published about 1800. Peter was a goat-herd on the Hartz mountains and one day he met a stranger who led him to a group of bowlers. Like Rip, he drank deeply of their wine; like Rip he slept for twenty years. When he awoke and went home, his experiences also were like Rip's. But although Irving followed his source closely for the incidents of the tale, he improved upon them and told the story with such charm that we now have in Rip one of the most likable personalities in our literature.

The popularity of *Rip Van Winkle* is due in no small measure to its frequent presentation upon the stage. It has been dramatized by several different playwrights, notably by Dion Boucicault but it remained for the talented American actor, Joseph Jefferson to establish the role as a classic of the English spoken drama.

RIP VAN WINKLE¹

A POSTHUMOUS² WRITING OF DIEDRICH
KNICKERBOCKER.³

By Woden, God of Saxons,
From whence comes Wensday, that is Wodensday.
Truth is a thing that ever I will keep
Unto thylke day in which I creep into
My sepulchre. CARTWRIGHT.⁴

THE following tale was found among the papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker, an old gentleman of New York, who was very curious in the Dutch history of the province, and the manners of the descendants from its primitive settlers. His historical researches, however, did not lie so much among books as among men; for the former are lamentably scanty on his favorite topics; whereas he found the old burghers, and still more their wives, rich in that legendary lore so invaluable to true history. Whenever, therefore, he happened upon a genuine Dutch family, snugly shut up in its low-roofed farmhouse under a spreading sycamore, he looked upon it as a little clasped volume of black-letter, and studied it with the zeal of a bookworm.

The result of all these researches was a history of the province during the reign of the Dutch governors, which he published some years since. There have been various opinions as to the literary character of his

work, and, to tell the truth, it is not a whit better than it should be. Its chief merit is its scrupulous accuracy, which indeed was a little questioned on its first appearance, but has since been completely established; and it is now admitted into all historical collections, as a book of unquestionable authority.

The old gentleman died shortly after the publication of his work, and now that he is dead and gone, it cannot do much harm to his memory to say that his time might have been much better employed in weightier labors. He, however, was apt to ride his hobby his own way; and though it did now and then kick up the dust a little in the eyes of his neighbors, and grieve the spirit of some friends, for whom he felt the truest deference and affection; yet his errors and follies are remembered "more in sorrow than in anger," and it begins to be suspected that he never intended to injure or offend. But however his memory may be appreciated by critics, it is still held dear by many folk, whose good opinion is worth having; particularly by certain biscuit-bakers, who have gone so far as to imprint his likeness on their new-year cakes;⁵ and have thus given him a chance for immortality, almost equal to the being stamped on a Waterloo Medal,⁶ or a Queen Anne's Farthing.⁷

RIP VAN WINKLE

WHOEVER has made a voyage up the Hudson⁸ must remember the Kaatskill Mountains.⁹ They are a dismembered branch of the great Appalachian¹⁰ family, and are seen away to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height, and lording it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed, every hour of the day, produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains, and they are regarded by all the good wives, far and near, as perfect barometers.¹¹ When the weather is fair and settled, they are clothed in blue and purple, and print their bold outlines on the clear evening sky; but sometimes when the rest of the landscape is cloudless they will gather a hood of gray vapors about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

At the foot of these fairy mountains, the voyager may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village, whose shingle-roofs gleam among the trees, just where the blue tints of the upland melt away into the fresh green of the nearer landscape. It is a little village of great antiquity, having been founded by some of the Dutch colonists¹² in the early time of the province, just about the beginning of the government of the good Peter Stuyvesant,¹³ (may he rest in peace!) and there were some of the houses of the original settlers standing within a few years, built of

small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed¹⁴ windows and gable¹⁵ fronts, surmounted with weathercocks.

In that same village, and in one of these very houses (which, to tell the precise truth, was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten), there lived many years since, while the country was yet a province¹⁶ of Great Britain, a simple, good-natured fellow, of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous¹⁷ days of Peter Stuyvesant, and accompanied him to the siege of Fort Christina.¹⁸ He inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple, good-natured man; he was, moreover, a kind neighbor, and an obedient hen-pecked¹⁹ husband. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity; for those men are most apt to be obsequious and conciliating abroad, who are under the discipline of shrews²⁰ at home. Their tempers, doubtless, are rendered pliant and malleable in the fiery furnace of domestic tribulation; and a curtain lecture²¹ is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering. A termagant²² wife may, therefore, in some respects be considered a tolerable blessing, and if so, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

Certain it is, that he was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles; and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached.

He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity; and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighborhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labor. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's²³ lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble.²⁴ He would carry a fowl-ing-piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbor, even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone-fences; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word, Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm; it was the most pestilent²⁵ little piece of ground in the whole country; everything about it went wrong, and would go wrong, in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure

to grow quicker in his fields than anywhere else; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some out-door work to do; so that though his patrimonial²⁶ estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst-conditioned farm in the neighborhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son²⁷ Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father's cast-off galligaskins,²⁸ which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound.²⁹ If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon, and night her tongue was incessantly going, and everything he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife; so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house—the only side which, in truth, belongs to a henpecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much henpecked as his master ; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honorable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods—but what courage can withstand the ever-during and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue? The moment Wolf entered the house his crest fell, his tail drooped to the ground, or curled between his legs, he sneaked about with a gallows air,³⁰ casting many a side-long glance at Dame Van Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.³¹

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle as years of matrimony rolled on ; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages,³² philosophers,³³ and other idle personages of the village ; which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund³⁴ portrait of His Majesty George the Third.³⁵ Here they used to sit in the shade through a long lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions that sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands from some passing travellers. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the school-master, a dapper learned

little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary; and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place.

The opinions of this junto were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch³⁶ of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently to avoid the sun and keep in the shade of a large tree; so that the neighbors could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sun-dial.³⁷ It is true he was rarely heard to speak, but smoked his pipe incessantly. His adherents, however (for every great man has his adherents), perfectly understood him, and knew how to gather his opinions. When anything that was read or related displeased him, he was observed to smoke his pipe vehemently, and to send forth short, frequent and angry puffs; but when pleased, he would inhale the smoke slowly and tranquilly, and emit it in light and placid clouds; and sometimes, taking the pipe from his mouth, and letting the fragrant vapor curl about his nose, would gravely nod his head in token of perfect approbation.

From even this stronghold the unlucky Rip was at length routed by his termagant wife, who would suddenly break in upon the tranquillity of the assemblage and call the members all to naught; nor was that august personage, Nicholas Vedder himself, sacred from the daring tongue of this terrible virago,³⁸ who charged him outright with encouraging her husband in habits of idleness.

Poor Rip was at last reduced almost to despair and his only alternative, to escape from the labor of the farm and clamor of his wife, was to take gun in

hand and stroll away into the woods. Here he would sometimes seat himself at the foot of a tree, and share the contents of his wallet³⁹ with Wolf, with whom he sympathized as a fellow-sufferer in persecution. "Poor Wolf," he would say, "thy⁴⁰ mistress leads thee a dog's life of it; but never mind, my lad, whilst I live thou shalt never want a friend to stand by thee!" Wolf would wag his tail, look wistfully in his master's face, and if dogs can feel pity I verily believe he reciprocated⁴¹ the sentiment with all his heart.

In a long ramble of the kind on a fine autumnal day, Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Kaatskill Mountains. He was after his favorite sport of squirrel shooting, and the still solitudes had echoed and reëchoed with the reports of his gun. Panting and fatigued, he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll, covered with mountain herbage,⁴² that crowned the brow of a precipice.⁴³ From an opening between the trees he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson, far, far below him, moving on its silent but majestic course, with the reflection of a purple cloud, or the sail of a lagging⁴⁴ bark, here and there, sleeping on its glossy bosom, and at last losing itself in the blue highlands.

On the other side he looked down into a deep mountain glen,⁴⁵ wild, lonely, and shagged, the bottom filled with fragments from the impending⁴⁶ cliffs, and scarcely lighted by the reflected rays of the setting sun. For some time Rip lay musing⁴⁷ on this scene; evening was gradually advancing, the mountains began to throw their long blue shadows over the valleys; he saw that it would be dark long before he could reach

the village, and he heaved a heavy sigh when he thought of encountering the terrors of Dame Van Winkle.

As he was about to descend, he heard a voice from a distance, hallooing, "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" He looked round, but could see nothing but a crow winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his fancy must have deceived him, and turned again to descend, when he heard the same cry ring through the still evening air: "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!"—at the same time Wolf bristled up his back, and giving a low growl, skulked to his master's side, looking fearfully down into the glen. Rip now felt a vague apprehension stealing over him; he looked anxiously in the same direction, and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks, and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely and unfrequented place; but supposing it to be some one of the neighborhood in need of his assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach he was still more surprised at the singularity of the stranger's appearance. He was a short, square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair, and a grizzled⁴⁸ beard. His dress was of the antique Dutch fashion: a cloth jerkin⁴⁹ strapped round the waist, several pair of breeches, the outer one of ample volume,⁵⁰ decorated with rows of buttons down the sides, and bunches at the knees. He bore on his shoulder a stout keg, that seemed full of liquor, and made signs for Rip to approach and assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied with his usual alacrity; and mutually relieving one another, they clam-

bered up a narrow gully, apparently the dry bed of a mountain torrent.⁵¹ As they ascended, Rip every now and then heard long rolling peals like distant thunder, that seemed to issue out of a deep ravine, or rather cleft, between lofty rocks, toward which their rugged path conducted. He paused for a moment, but supposing it to be the muttering of one of those transient thunder-showers which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheatre,⁵² surrounded by perpendicular⁵³ precipices, over the brinks of which impending trees shot their branches, so that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky and the bright evening cloud. During the whole time Rip and his companion had labored on in silence; for though the former marvelled greatly what could be the object of carrying a keg of liquor up this wild mountain, yet there was something strange and incomprehensible about the unknown, that inspired awe and checked familiarity.

On entering the amphitheatre, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the centre was a company of odd-looking personages playing at ninepins.⁵⁴ They were dressed in a quaint outlandish fashion; some wore short doublets,⁵⁵ others jerkins, with long knives in their belts, and most of them had enormous breeches of similar style with that of the guide's. Their visages, too, were peculiar; one had a large beard, broad face, and small piggish eyes; the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf⁵⁶ hat, set off with a little red cock's tail. They all had beards, of various shapes and colors. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman,

with a weather-beaten countenance; he wore a laced doublet, broad belt and hanger,⁵⁷ high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes, with roses⁵⁸ in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish⁵⁹ painting in the parlor of Dominie⁶⁰ Van Shaick, the village parson, which had been brought over from Holland at the time of the settlement.

What seemed particularly odd to Rip was, that though these folks were evidently amusing themselves, yet they maintained the gravest faces, the most mysterious silence, and were, withal, the most melancholy party of pleasure he had ever witnessed. Nothing interrupted the stillness of the scene but the noise of the balls, which, whenever they were rolled, echoed along the mountains like rumbling peals of thunder.

As Rip and his companion approached them, they suddenly desisted from their play, and stared at him with such fixed, statue-like gaze, and such strange, uncouth,⁶¹ lack-lustre countenances, that his heart turned within him, and his knees smote together. His companion now emptied the contents of the keg into large flagons,⁶² and made signs to him to wait upon the company. He obeyed with fear and trembling; they quaffed⁶³ the liquor in profound silence, and then returned to their game.

By degrees Rip's awe and apprehension subsided. He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage, which he found had much of the flavor of excellent Hollands.⁶⁴ He was naturally a thirsty soul, and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another; and he reiterated his visits to the flagon so often that at length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head,

his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.

On waking, he found himself on the green knoll whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes—it was a bright, sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle⁶⁵ was wheeling aloft, and breasting the pure mountain breeze. “Surely,” thought Rip, “I have not slept here all night.” He recalled the occurrences before he fell asleep. The strange man with a keg of liquor—the mountain ravine—the wild retreat among the rocks—the woe-begone party at ninepins—the flagon—“Oh! that flagon! that wicked flagon!” thought Rip—“what excuse shall I make to Dame Van Winkle?”

He looked round for his gun, but in place of the clean, well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old fire-lock⁶⁶ lying by him, the barrel incrusting with rust, the lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. He now suspected that the grave roisters⁶⁷ of the mountain had put a trick upon him, and, having dosed him with liquor, had robbed him of his gun. Wolf, too, had disappeared, but he might have strayed away after a squirrel or partridge.⁶⁸ He whistled after him, and shouted his name, but all in vain; the echoes repeated his whistle and shout, but no dog was to be seen.

He determined to revisit the scene of the last evening’s gambol,⁶⁹ and if he met with any of the party, to demand his dog and gun. As he rose to walk, he found himself stiff in the joints, and wanting in his usual activity. “These mountain beds do not agree with me,” thought Rip, “and if this frolic should lay me up with a fit of the rheumatism, I shall have a blessed time with Dame Van Winkle.” With some

difficulty he got down into the glen; he found the gully up which he and his companion had ascended the preceding evening; but to his astonishment a mountain stream was now foaming down it, leaping from rock to rock, and filling the glen with babbling murmurs. He, however, made shift to scramble up its sides, working his toilsome way through thickets of birch, sassafras,⁷⁰ and witch-hazel,⁷¹ and sometimes tripped up or entangled by the wild grapevines that twisted their coils or tendrils from tree to tree, and spread a kind of network in his path.

At length he reached to where the ravine had opened through the cliffs to the amphitheatre; but no traces of such opening remained. The rocks presented a high, impenetrable wall, over which the torrent came tumbling in a sheet of feathery foam, and fell into a broad, deep basin, black from the shadows of the surrounding forest. Here, then, poor Rip was brought to a stand. He again called and whistled after his dog; he was only answered by the cawing of a flock of idle crows, sporting high in air about a dry tree that overhung a sunny precipice; and who, secure in their elevation, seemed to look down and scoff⁷² at the poor man's perplexities. What was to be done? the morning was passing away, and Rip felt famished for want of his breakfast. He grieved to give up his dog and gun; he dreaded to meet his wife; but it would not do to starve among the mountains. He shook his head, shouldered the rusty firelock, and, with a heart full of trouble and anxiety, turned his steps homeward.

As he approached the village he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted

with every one in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast their eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture induced Rip, involuntarily, to do the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long!

He had now entered the skirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard. The dogs, too, not one of which he recognized for an old acquaintance, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered; it was larger and more populous.⁷³ There were rows of houses which he had never seen before, and those which had been his familiar haunts had disappeared. Strange names were over the doors—strange faces at the windows,—everything was strange. His mind now misgave him; he began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village, which he had left but the day before. There stood the Kaatskill Mountains—there ran the silver Hudson at a distance—there was every hill and dale⁷⁴ precisely as it had always been—Rip was sorely perplexed—“That flagon last night,” thought he, “has addled⁷⁵ my poor head sadly!”

It was with some difficulty that he found the way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay—the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off the hinges. A half-starved dog that looked like Wolf was skulking about it. Rip called

him by name, but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on. This was an unkind cut indeed—"My very dog," sighed poor Rip, "has forgotten me!"

He entered the house, which, to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty, forlorn, and apparently abandoned. This desolateness overcame all his connubial⁷⁶ fears—he called loudly for his wife and children—the lonely chambers rang for a moment with his voice, and then again all was silence.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the village inn—but it, too, was gone. A large, rickety wooden building stood in its place, with great gaping windows, some of them broken and mended with old hats and petticoats, and over the door was painted, "The Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle." Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore, there now was reared a tall naked pole, with something on top that looked like a red night-cap,⁷⁷ and from it was fluttering a flag, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes—all this was strange and incomprehensible. He recognized on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe; but even this was singularly metamorphosed.⁷⁸ The red coat was changed for one of blue and buff,⁷⁹ a sword was held in the hand instead of a sceptre,⁸⁰ the head was decorated with a cocked hat,⁸¹ and underneath was painted in large characters, GENERAL WASHINGTON.⁸²

There was, as usual, a crowd of folk about the door, but none that Rip recollected. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling, disputatious tone about it, instead of the accus-

tomed phlegm⁸³ and drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for the sage Nicholas Vedder, with his broad face, double chin, and fair long pipe, uttering clouds of tobacco-smoke instead of idle speeches; or Van Bummel, the school-master, doling forth the contents of an ancient newspaper. In place of these, a lean bilious-looking fellow, with his pockets full of hand bills, was haranguing⁸⁴ vehemently about rights of citizens—elections—members of congress—liberty—Bunker's Hill⁸⁵—heroes of seventy-six⁸⁶—and other words, which were a perfect Babylonish jargon⁸⁷ to the bewildered Van Winkle.

The appearance of Rip, with his long grizzled beard, his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and an army of women and children at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the tavern-politicians. They crowded round him, eying him from head to foot with great curiosity. The orator bustled up to him, and, drawing him partly aside, inquired "on which side he voted?" Rip started in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and, rising on tiptoe, inquired in his ear, "Whether he was Federal or Democrat?"⁸⁸ Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question; when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his cane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded in an austere tone, "what brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder, and a mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village?"—"Alas! gentlemen," cried Rip, somewhat

dismayed, "I am a poor quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the king, God bless him!"

Here a general shout burst from the bystanders—"A tory!⁸⁹ a tory! a spy!⁹⁰ a refugee!⁹¹ hustle him! away with him!" It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order; and, having assumed a tenfold austerity of brow, demanded again of the unknown culprit what he came there for, and whom he was seeking? The poor man humbly assured him that he meant no harm, but merely came there in search of some of his neighbors, who used to keep about the tavern.

"Well—who are they?—name them."

Rip bethought himself a moment, and inquired, "Where's Nicholas Vedder?"

There was a silence for a little while, when an old man replied, in a thin, piping voice: "Nicholas Vedder! why, he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tombstone in the churchyard that used to tell all about him, but that's rotten and gone too."

"Where's Brom Dutcher?"

"Oh, he went off to the army in the beginning of the war; some say he was killed at the storming of Stony Point⁹²—others say he was drowned in a squall at the foot of Antony's Nose.⁹³ I don't know—he never came back again."

"Where's Van Bummel, the school-master?"

"He went off to the wars too, was a great militia general, and is now in Congress."

Rip's heart died away at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world. Every answer puzzled him too, by treating of such enormous lapses of time, and

of matters which he could not understand: war—Congress—Stony Point; he had no courage to ask after any more friends, but cried out in despair, “Does anybody here know Rip Van Winkle?”

“Oh, Rip Van Winkle!” exclaimed two or three, “Oh, to be sure! that’s Rip Van Winkle yonder, leaning against the tree.”

Rip looked, and beheld a precise counterpart of himself, as he went up the mountain: apparently as lazy, and certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He doubted his own identity, and whether he was himself or another man. In the midst of his bewilderment, the man in the cocked hat demanded who he was, and what was his name?

“God knows,” exclaimed he, at his wit’s end; “I’m not myself—I’m somebody else—that’s me yonder—no—that’s somebody else got into my shoes—I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain, and they’ve changed my gun, and everything’s changed, and I’m changed, and I can’t tell what’s my name, or who I am!”

The bystanders began now to look at each other, nod, wink significantly, and tap their fingers against their foreheads. There was a whisper, also, about securing the gun, and keeping the old fellow from doing mischief, at the very suggestion of which the self-important man in the cocked hat retired with some precipitation. At this critical moment a fresh, comely woman pressed through the throng to get a peep at the gray-bearded man. She had a chubby child in her arms, which, frightened at his looks, began to cry. “Hush, Rip,” cried she, “hush, you little fool; the old man won’t hurt you.” The name of the child, the air

of the mother, the tone of her voice, all awakened a train of recollections in his mind. "What is you name, my good woman?" asked he.

"Judith Gardenier."

"And your father's name?"

"Ah, poor man, Rip Van Winkle was his name, but it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and never has been heard of since,—his dog came home without him; but whether he shot himself, or was carried away by the Indians, nobody can tell. I was then but a little girl."

Rip had but one question more to ask; and he put it with a faltering voice:—

"Where's your mother?"

"Oh, she too had died but a short time since; she broke a blood-vessel in a fit of passion at a New England peddler."⁹⁴

There was a drop of comfort at least, in this intelligence. The honest man could contain himself no longer. He caught his daughter and her child in his arms. "I am your father!" cried he—"Young Rip Van Winkle once—old Rip Van Winkle now! Does nobody know poor Rip Van Winkle?"

All stood amazed, until an old woman, tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed, "Sure enough it is Rip Van Winkle—it is himself! Welcome home again, old neighbor—Why, where have you been these twenty long years?"

Rip's story was soon told, for the whole twenty years had been to him but as one night. The neighbors stared when they heard it; some were seen to wink at each other, and put their tongues in their cheeks; and the self-important man in the cocked hat,

who, when the alarm was over, had returned to the field, screwed down the corners of his mouth, and shook his head—upon which there was a general shaking of the head throughout the assemblage.

It was determined, however, to take the opinion of old Peter Vanderdonk,⁹⁵ who was seen slowly advancing up the road. He was a descendant of the historian of that name, who wrote one of the earliest accounts of the province. Peter was the most ancient inhabitant of the village, and well versed in all the wonderful events and traditions of the neighborhood. He recollected Rip at once, and corroborated his story in the most satisfactory manner. He assured the company that it was a fact, handed down from his ancestor the historian, that the Kaatskill Mountains had always been haunted by strange beings. That it was affirmed that the great Hendrick Hudson,⁹⁶ the first discoverer of the river and country, kept a kind of vigil⁹⁷ there every twenty years, with his crew of the Half Moon;⁹⁸ being permitted in this way to revisit the scenes of his enterprise, and keep a guardian eye upon the river and the great city⁹⁹ called by his name. That his father had once seen them in their old Dutch dresses playing at ninepins in a hollow of the mountain; and that he himself had heard, one summer afternoon, the sound of their balls like distant peals of thunder.

To make a long story short, the company broke up, and returned to the more important concerns of the election. Rip's daughter took him home to live with her; she had a snug well-furnished house, and a stout cheery farmer for a husband, whom Rip recollected for one of the urchins that used to climb upon his back. As to Rip's son and heir, who was the ditto of

himself, seen leaning against the tree, he was employed to work on the farm; but evinced an hereditary disposition to attend to anything else but his business.

Rip now resumed his old walks and habits; he soon found many of his former cronies, though all rather the worse for the wear and tear of time; and preferred making friends among the rising generation, with whom he soon grew into great favor.

Having nothing to do at home, and being arrived at that happy age when a man can be idle with impunity, he took his place once more on the bench at the inn door, and was revered as one of the patriarchs of the village, and a chronicle of the old times "before the war." It was some time before he could get into the regular track of gossip, or could be made to comprehend the strange events that had taken place during his torpor. How that there had been a revolutionary war—that the country had thrown off the yoke of old England—and that, instead of being a subject of his Majesty George the Third, he was now a free citizen of the United States. Rip, in fact, was no politician; the changes of states and empires made but little impression on him; but there was one species of despotism under which he had long groaned, and that was—petticoat government. Happily that was at an end; he had got his neck out of the yoke of matrimony, and could go in and out whenever he pleased, without dreading the tyranny of Dame Van Winkle. Whenever her name was mentioned, however, he shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and cast up his eyes, which might pass either for an expression of resignation to his fate, or joy at his deliverance.

He used to tell his story to every stranger that ar-

rived at Mr. Doolittle's hotel. He was observed, at first, to vary on some points every time he told it, which was, doubtless, owing to his having so recently awaked. It at last settled down precisely to the tale I have related, and not a man, woman, or child in the neighborhood but knew it by heart. Some always pretended to doubt the reality of it, and insisted that Rip had been out of his head, and that this was one point on which he always remained flighty. The old Dutch inhabitants, however, almost universally gave it full credit. Even to this day they never hear a thunder-storm of a summer afternoon about the Kaatskill, but they say Hendrick Hudson and his crew are at their game of ninepins; and it is a common wish of all henpecked husbands in the neighborhood, when life hangs heavy on their hands, that they might have a quieting draught out of Rip Van Winkle's flagon.

NOTE.

The foregoing Tale, one would suspect, had been suggested to Mr. Knickerbocker by a little German superstition about the Emperor Frederick¹⁰⁰ *der Rothbart*, and the Kypphaüser mountain; the subjoined note, however, which he had appended to the tale, shows that it is an absolute fact, narrated with his usual fidelity.

"The story of Rip Van Winkle may seem incredible to many, but nevertheless I give it my full belief, for I know the vicinity of our old Dutch settlements to have been very subject to marvellous events and appearances. Indeed, I have heard many stranger stories than this, in the villages along the Hudson; all of which were too well authenticated to admit of a doubt. I have even talked with Rip Van Winkle myself, who, when last I saw him, was a very old vener-

able man, and so perfectly rational and consistent on every other point, that I think no conscientious person could refuse to take this into the bargain; nay, I have seen a certificate on the subject taken before a country justice and signed with a cross, in the justice's own handwriting. The story therefore, is beyond the possibility of doubt.

“D. K.”

POSTSCRIPT.

The following are travelling notes from a memorandum-book of Mr. Knickerbocker:—

The Kaatsberg, or Catskill Mountains, have always been a region full of fable. The Indians considered them the abode of spirits, who influenced the weather, spreading sunshine or clouds over the landscape, and sending good or bad hunting seasons. They were ruled by an old squaw spirit, said to be their mother. She dwelt on the highest peak of the Catskills, and had charge of the doors of day and night to open and shut them at the proper hour. She hung up the new moons in the skies, and cut up the old ones into stars. In times of drought, if properly propitiated, she would spin light summer clouds out of cobwebs and morning dew, and send them off from the crest of the mountain, flake after flake, like flakes of carded cotton, to float in the air; until, dissolved by the heat of the sun, they would fall in gentle showers, causing the grass to spring, the fruits to ripen, and the corn to grow an inch an hour. If displeased, however, she would brew up clouds black as ink, sitting in the midst of them like a bottle-bellied spider in the midst of its web; and when these clouds broke, woe betide the valleys!

In old times, say the Indian traditions, there was a kind of Manitou or Spirit, who kept about the widest recesses of the Catskill Mountains, and took a mischievous pleasure in wreaking all kinds of evils and vexations upon the red men. Sometimes he would assume the form of a bear, a panther, or a deer, lead the bewildered hunter a weary chase through tangled

forest and among ragged rocks; and then spring off with a loud ho! ho! leaving him aghast on the brink of a beetling precipice or raging torrent.

The favorite abode of this Manitou is still shown. It is a great rock or cliff on the loneliest part of the mountains, and from the flowering vines which clamber about it, and the wild flowers which abound in its neighborhood, is known by the name of the Garden Rock. Near the foot of it is a small lake, the haunt of the solitary bittern, with water-snakes basking in the sun on the leaves of the pond-lilies which lie on the surface. This place was held in great awe by the Indians, insomuch that the boldest hunter would not pursue his game within its precincts. Once upon a time, however, a hunter, who had lost his way, penetrated to the Garden Rock, where he beheld a number of gourds placed in the crotches of trees. One of these he seized and made off with it, but in the hurry of his retreat he let it fall among the rocks, when a great stream gushed forth, which washed him away and swept him down precipices, where he was dashed to pieces, and the stream made its way to the Hudson, and continues to flow to the present day; being the identical stream known by the name of the Kaaters-kill.

NOTES

1. **Rip Van Winkle.** In Irving's *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, the Van Winkles are listed among the seven hundred valiant soldiers who "full of wrath and cabbage" followed Governor Peter Stuyvesant to the attack upon Fort Christina.
2. **posthumous.** Published after the death of the author.
3. **Diedrich Knickerbocker.** The *nom de plume* under which Irving wrote a burlesque *History of New York*. Father Knickerbocker personifies New York as Uncle Sam does the United States.

4. **Cartwright.** William Cartwright, an English poet of the age following Shakespeare.
6. **Waterloo medal.** A medal made in honor of the battle of Waterloo, 1815 to be worn by the soldiers who aided Wellington in his victory over Napoleon. The commemoration of important battles in that manner is a general practice.
7. **Queen Anne's Farthing.** According to a popular error only three farthings were coined during the reign of Queen Anne, 1702-1714. Two of them were believed to be in the British museum, and the other was supposed to be held at a great value by coin collectors. As a matter of fact, these coins are neither rare nor highly valued.
5. **New Year's cakes.** Seed cakes baked at New Year's time.
8. **Hudson.** The Hudson River bears the name of Henry Hudson, the great English navigator who, while in the employ of the Dutch, discovered it in 1609. The Hudson is called the American Rhine on account of its picturesque scenery which is especially lovely in the Highlands and along the Palisades.
9. **Kaatskill Mountains.** The Dutch name of the Catskill mountains. They are noted for fine scenery and in summer the many mountain and lake resorts of the region are thronged by tourists. Modern geographers do not regard them as a part of the Appalachian mountain system.
10. **Appalachian.** The Appalachian mountain system extends through eastern North America, mainly in the United States, from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico. It includes the White Mountains, Green Mountains, The Blue Ridge, Alleghany Mountains, Cumberland Mountains and other ranges, but not the Catskills nor the Adirondacks.

11. **barometer.** An instrument which measures atmospheric pressure and is used to forecast the weather.
12. **Dutch colonists.** The Dutch based their claim to New York and the valley of the Hudson upon the discoveries of Hudson. They were the original settlers there and during Irving's youth Dutch manners and customs still prevailed throughout that region. The old Dutch families were especially influential in the society of New York City.
13. **Peter Stuyvesant.** The last Dutch governor of New York. He was a brave and honest executive but high-tempered. He had lost a leg in war and stumped about on a wooden leg ornamented with silver bands. In 1664 the English captured New York and Stuyvesant retired to his farm, called the Bouerwig. The Bowery, a noted street on the East Side of New York, extends through what was once Stuyvesant's farm and derives its name from it. Stuyvesant was buried on the site of St. Mark's Church.
14. **latticed.** Having interlaced bars to hold the panes of glass.
15. **gable.** The top of the end wall of a building.
16. **province.** Colony.
17. **chivalrous.** Knightly. The code of conduct for a medieval knight required him to be honorable, to engage in romantic adventure, to protect the weak, to defend women, and to show mercy to defeated foes.
18. **Fort Christina.** This fort, built by the Dutch, captured by the Swedes, and retaken by the Dutch under Governor Stuyvesant, was on the Delaware River below Philadelphia, at the present site of Newcastle, Delaware. It marked the unsuccessful attempt of Sweden to found a colony in America.
19. **hen-pecked.** Nagged and domineered over by his wife.

20. **shrew.** A woman who makes biting remarks; a scold.
21. **curtain lecture.** Old-fashioned beds were furnished with curtains and gave privacy to the reproaches of the fault-finding wife from which sleep seldom saved her helpless husband.
22. **termagant.** Scolding.
skirts. Coat-tails.
23. **Tartar.** Properly Tatar; an Asiatic savage like those who ravaged eastern Europe in the thirteenth century.
24. **nibble.** To bite cautiously without getting the hook into the mouth.
25. **pestilent.** Destructive of peace and joy like a pestilence, an infectious, fatal sickness.
26. **patrimonial.** Ancestral property inherited from his father or other ancestor. (*patri* means father).
27. **urchin.** A mischievous boy.
28. **galligaskins.** Loose breeches, like the long loose hose worn in Gascony, France, the 16th century.
29. **pound.** See note 70, p. 112.
30. **gallows air.** A "hang-dog" look. The gallows is a framework on which criminals are hanged.
31. **precipitation.** Headlong haste.
32. **sage.** See note 67, p. 235.
33. **philosopher.** (*philo* means lover, *soph* means wisdom). A wise man; a lover of learning.
34. **rubicund.** Flushed.
35. **George the Third.** King of England during the American Revolution. His reign lasted until 1820. He was, therefore, on the throne at the time Irving wrote this tale.
Tavern signs were painted to illustrate the name of the establishment.
36. **patriarch.** An aged and venerable man, like the headmen of the early tribes of mankind such as are named in the Bible.

37. **sundial.** An instrument for telling time. The sun casts a shadow upon a dial on which the hours are marked.
38. **virago.** (*vir* means man). An Amazon, a bold noisy woman.
39. **wallet.** A satchel or knap sack with a strap for slinging it across the shoulders. Doubtless Rip put the game he shot into it.
40. **thy.** A century ago the singular form of the pronoun of the second person was in common use. Now the plural form only is used.
41. **reciprocated.** Returned, paid back.
42. **herbage.** Grass.
43. **precipice.** A cliff, a steep rocky height.
44. **lagging.** Moving slowly.
45. **glen.** A narrow valley.
46. **impend.** Overhanging (*pend* means hang).
47. **musings.** Day-dreaming. The Nine Muses were the goddesses who ruled over the arts and sciences.
48. **grizzled.** Gray; mixed with gray.
49. **jerkin.** A jacket.
50. **ample volume.** Compare this description with what Dickens says of a Dutchman's costume.
51. **torrent.** A swift, gushing mountain stream. In spring or after a heavy rainfall such streams carry off the water and afterward become dry.
52. **amphitheatre.** (*amphi* means double.) The Greek theatre was shaped like a horse shoe with the stage along the flat side. Two theatres placed together made a round enclosure surrounded by tiers of seats. The performance took place in the middle.
53. **perpendicular.** Straight up and down.
54. **ninepins.** Bowling was originally an outdoor exercise. Bowling Green, near the Battery in New York City, was so named because this game was played there.
56. **sugar-loaf.** Shaped like a cone of sugar.

55. **doublet.** A closefitting blouse that came about to the waist.
57. **hanger.** A short, curved sword.
58. **roses.** Rosettes.
59. **Flemish.** Pertaining to Flanders, a former country of Europe, now comprised in southern Belgium and northern France. The Flemish painters were noted for their lifelike portraits.
60. **Dominie.** (*dominus* means master). A preacher of the Dutch Reformed Church.
61. **uncouth.** Boorish, uncultured.
62. **flagons.** Vessels with narrow mouths.
63. **quaff.** To drink in large gulps.
64. **Hollands.** Gin; an intoxicating beverage, colorless like water.
65. **eagle.** Eagles are still occasionally seen in remote parts of the Catskills.
66. **firelock.** An old-style gun which was fired by a spark. Rip's fowling-piece was such a gun.
67. **roisters.** Roisterers, gamesters.
68. **partridge.** A wild bird hunted as game.
69. **gambol.** Frolic.
70. **sassafras.** A small tree whose aromatic bark and roots are used in medicine and as a flavor.
71. **witch-hazel.** A shrub. A forked twig of this plant held in the hand is supposed to have the magic property of dipping toward water, and precious minerals. From the yellow flowers which appear late in autumn the lotion of the same name is extracted.
72. **scoff.** Mock, make fun of.
73. **populous.** (*populus* means people). Having many inhabitants.
74. **dale.** A valley.
75. **addled.** Muddled, confused, formless, like mud.
76. **connubial.** Pertaining to marriage.
77. **a red night cap.** The liberty cap. The red cap worn by the barefooted market tenders

- of Paris has become the emblem of freedom. A similar cap was worn by Roman slaves when they bought or were given their liberty.
78. **metamorphosed.** Changed in form as a caterpillar turns into a butterfly or a polywog into a frog.
79. **blue and buff.** The Continentals, as the American soldiers of the Revolutionary War were called, wore blue uniforms with buff trimmings. The British were the "Red Coats."
80. **sceptre.** A rod variously ornamented used by sovereigns as the emblem of authority.
81. **cocked hat.** A hat with the brim turned up in three places to give it a triangular shape.
82. **General Washington.** The new name of the tavern.
83. **phlegm.** Sluggish temperament.
84. **haranguing.** Making a speech in high flown language without much sense.
85. **Bunker's Hill.** Bunker Hill in Boston was the scene of the first battle of the Revolution. The Americans, although defeated, proved to themselves that they could successfully resist the trained regular troops of the British Army.
86. **seventy-six—1776;** the year in which The Declaration of Independence was signed.
87. **Babylonish jargon.** According to the Bible, the builders of the Tower of Babel (Babylon) in Mesopotamia were punished for their impiety by a miracle which made them unable to understand one another. They were therefore, unable to finish the tower, which was intended to reach to Heaven. This is the traditional explanation of the diversity of languages in the world.
88. **Federal or Democrat.** The original political parties in the United States. The Federalists, under the leadership of Hamilton, advocated the adoption of the Constitution so

as to strengthen the national government. The Democrats, led by Jefferson, asserted the doctrine of States' Rights.

Rip returned on Election Day.

89. **tory.** An American who remained loyal to King George III and the British government during the American Revolution; so-named because the Tory party in England supported the King in his oppression of the American colonists. The Whigs favored a conciliatory policy toward the colonists.
90. **spy.** The war was over; otherwise Rip would have been arrested.
91. **refugee.** Thousands of tories took refuge in Canada.
92. **Stony Point.** A promontory projecting from the west bank of the Hudson River at the beginning of the Highlands. During the Revolution the Americans built there a fort which the British captured. Soon afterwards it was retaken by the Americans in a gallant assault led by the heroic American general Anthony Wayne, nicknamed for his fiery courage "Mad Anthony."
93. **Antony's Nose.** A promontory jutting into the Hudson River from the east bank, a few miles north of Stony Point. Irving says, in the *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, that it was named by Peter Stuyvesant in honor of the redoubtable nose of his trumpeter, Antony Van Corlear.
94. **New England peddler.** The Yankees, as the New Englanders were called, produced a variety of wares, from clocks to "wooden nutmegs." These, with a variety of wares brought from foreign lands in their clipper ships were the stock in trade of travelling merchants who sold or bartered these goods throughout the Atlantic seaboard. Their shrewdness and their wiles became a national by-word.

95. **Peter Vanderdonk.** The historian's name was Adrian Vanderdonk. Peter evidently kept up the family reputation.
96. **Hendrick Hudson.** The Dutch form of Henry Hudson.
97. **vigil.** Watch; as remaining awake the night before a religious service.
98. **Half Moon.** The vessel in which Hudson crossed the Atlantic Ocean and sailed up the Hudson River almost to the present site of Albany.
99. **great city.** Hudson on the east bank of the Hudson River.
100. **Emperor Frederick.** A famous German ruler of The Holy Roman Empire in the twelfth century, who was drowned in Asia Minor while on a crusade. He was named Barbarossa or Rothbart because of his red beard. According to legend, Emperor Frederick is not dead but is asleep in a cave in Kyffhausen Mountain which is surmounted by a castle of the same name. Seated at a stone table with six of his knights he will awake whenever Germany is in danger, and come forth to lead the nation to victory against the foe.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND PROJECTS

I.

Rewrite each statement, selecting the word or words in *italics* which make the most accurate statement.

A.

1. Washington Irving was *illiterate, a college graduate, an indifferent student, a self-made man.*
2. As minister to Spain, Irving's duties were *religious, commercial, political, social.*
3. Rip Van Winkle is a *story, sermon, essay, speech.*

4. Rip Van Winkle is *a true story, founded on fact, true to life, adapted from another author.*
5. Irving makes the adventures of Rip Van Winkle seem *ridiculous, possible, probable, incredible.*

B.

1. Rip Van Winkle was *thrifty, ill-tempered, shiftless, sickly.*
2. Rip was a *good father, neighbor, hunter, farmer,*
3. Rip's neighbors *respected, employed, avoided, liked him.*
4. Rip's character was due to *lack of education, poverty, bad company, his own fault.*
5. Dame Van Winkle's ill temper was *excusable, inexcusable, habitual, unavailing.*
6. Rip had *no children, several sons, a grand daughter, a grandson.*
7. The bowlers were *smooth shaven, outlandish, unarmed, awe-inspiring.*
8. Rip's long absence from his native village was due to *liquor, a magic spell, his capture by Indians, fear of his wife, an attack of aphasia.*
9. The handbills in the pocket of the "lean, bilious-looking" demagogue advertised *candidates for office, patent medicines, a circus, the wares of a New England peddler, a reward for information as to Rip's whereabouts.*
10. When Rip returned to his native village, he was *welcomed, distrusted, admired, ignored by the villagers.*

II.

Write statements similar to the following, some true and others false. Let students distinguish the true statements from the false.

1. The Catskill mountains can be seen from the Hudson river. **True.**
2. Sunnyside is on the west bank of the Hudson river. **False.**

III.

Complete the following statements.

Do Not Mark the Book

A.

1. Washington Irving was a _____ of Charles Dickens.
2. Fulton invented the steamboat before Irving ———.
3. Washington Irving did not have a _____ at Sunnyside.
4. There is a great deal of _____ in the story of Rip Van Winkle.

B.

1. Rip Van Winkle had a _____ disposition.
2. Even at the inn, Rip was — — — — —.
3. Rip fell asleep in the mountains and _____
_____ — — — — —.
4. The bowlers were — — — — —.
5. They whispered to one another so that Rip was
_____ — — — — —.

6. They told him ————
———.
7. Wolf ————
———.
8. Judith Gardenier was ———.
9. After his return Rip frequently ———
———.

IV

1. Prepare a topical outline of the tale.
2. Make two lists of the persons mentioned:
 - (a) Those necessary to the plot.
 - (b) Those not necessary to it.
3. Pick out the terms applied to Dame Van Winkle and distinguish them as to shades of meaning.
4. List under the following heads the changes that take place during Rip's twenty-year sleep:
 - (a) himself; (b) his family; (c) his friends; (d) the mountain; (e) the village.
5. Select passages which illustrate Washington Irving's (a) humor, (b) delight in scenic beauty, (c) insight into character, (d) patriotism, (e) sympathy, (f) tolerance, (g) good nature.
6. Memorize the passage you like best.
7. Draw a map and on it locate the regions and places referred to in the story; also New York City and Tarrytown.
8. Collect pictures to illustrate a biographical sketch of Irving. Write such a sketch.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE, the most eminent of American novelists, was born July 4, 1804, and died May 19, 1864. He was a graduate of Bowdoin College, at Brunswick, Maine. The poet, Longfellow, and Franklin Pierce who became president of the United States were his classmates.

Hawthorne was a lover of solitude and even in manhood was not wholly without shyness. From his boyhood he had cherished the ambition to write books. After he left college he tried to earn his living by writing, but without much success. He was so critical of his work that he tore up much of his writing. The need for a better income than he could earn as an author forced Hawthorne to take a position in the Boston custom house under George Bancroft, the historian. A number of years later he was appointed to a position in the custom house at Salem. When Pierce was elected president, Hawthorne, who had written a campaign biography of him, was appointed consul at Liverpool, one of the best paid positions of the kind at the disposal of the president.

In the meantime Hawthorne had published several collections of tales, and in 1850 *The Scarlet Letter* appeared. It is Hawthorne's masterpiece and the chief foundation of his fame. It is one of the best romances ever written. Hawthorne wrote other successful novels and thus realized the ambition he had expressed as a youth in a letter to his mother, "How

would you like some day to see a whole shelf full of books, written by your son, with 'Hawthorne's Works,' printed on their backs?"

Nowhere in Hawthorne's works is there a reference to the Profile, or as it is also called, The Old Man of the Mountain, a celebrated group of rocks, high on the side of Mt. Cannon in New Hampshire near the beautiful Franconia Notch of the White Mountains. Sharply outlined against the sky, the rocks present a remarkable resemblance to a human face.

Hawthorne was, however, familiar with that region and it is not unlikely that he had visited this scenic wonder. At all events, he jotted down the following note in 1840:

"The semblance of a human face to be formed on the side of a mountain, or in the fracture of a small stone, by a *lusus naturæ* (freak of nature). The face is an object of curiosity for years or centuries, and by and by a boy is born whose features gradually assume the aspect of that portrait. At some critical juncture the resemblance is found to be perfect. A prophecy may be connected."

THE GREAT STONE FACE

ONE afternoon, when the sun was going down, a mother and her little boy sat at the door of their cottage, talking about the Great Stone Face. They had but to lift their eyes, and there it was plainly to be seen, though miles away, with the sunshine brightening all its features.

And what was the Great Stone Face?

Embosomed amongst a family of lofty mountains, there was a valley so spacious that it contained many thousand inhabitants. Some of these good people dwelt in log-huts, with the black forest all around them, on the steep and difficult hill-sides. Others had their homes in comfortable farm-houses, and cultivated the rich soil on the gentle slopes or level surfaces of the valley. Others, again, were congregated¹ into populous² villages, where some wild, highland rivulet, tumbling down from its birthplace in the upper mountain region, had been caught and tamed by human cunning, and compelled to turn the machinery of cotton-factories.³ The inhabitants of this valley, in short, were numerous, and of many modes of life. But all of them, grown people and children, had a kind of familiarity with the Great Stone Face, although some possessed the gift of distinguishing this grand natural phenomenon⁴ more perfectly than many of their neighbors.

The Great Stone Face, then, was a work of nature

in her mood of majestic playfulness, formed on the perpendicular⁵ side of a mountain by some immense rocks, which had been thrown together in such a position as, when viewed at a proper distance, precisely to resemble the features of the human countenance.⁶ It seemed as if an enormous giant, or a Titan,⁷ had sculptured his own likeness on the precipice.⁸ There was the broad arch of the forehead, a hundred feet in height; the nose, with its long bridge; and the vast lips, which, if they could have spoken, would have rolled their thunder accents from one end of the valley to the other. True it is, that if the spectator approached too near, he lost the outline of the gigantic visage, and could discern only a heap of ponderous and gigantic rocks, piled in chaotic⁹ ruin one upon another. Retracing his steps, however, the wondrous features would again be seen; and the farther he withdrew from them, the more like a human face, with all its original divinity intact, did they appear; until, as it grew dim in the distance, with the clouds and glorified vapor of the mountains clustering about it, the Great Stone Face seemed positively to be alive.

It was a happy lot for children to grow up to manhood or womanhood with the Great Stone Face before their eyes, for all the features were noble, and the expression was at once grand and sweet, as if it were the glow of a vast, warm heart, that embraced all mankind in its affections, and had room for more. It was an education only to look at it. According to the belief of many people, the valley owed much of its fertility to this benign¹⁰ aspect that was continually beaming over it, illuminating the clouds, and infusing its tenderness into the sunshine.

As we began with saying, a mother and her little

boy sat at their cottage-door, gazing at the Great Stone Face, and talking about it. The child's name was Ernest.

"Mother," said he, while the Titanic visage smiled on him, "I wish that it could speak, for it looks so very kindly that its voice must needs be pleasant. If I were to see a man with such a face, I should love him dearly."

"If an old prophecy¹¹ should come to pass," answered his mother, "we may see a man, some time or other, with exactly such a face as that."

"What prophecy do you mean, dear mother?" eagerly inquired Ernest. "Pray tell me all about it!"

So his mother told him a story that her own mother had told to her, when she herself was younger than little Ernest; a story, not of things that were past, but of what was yet to come; a story, nevertheless, so very old, that even the Indians,¹² who formerly inhabited this valley, had heard it from their forefathers, to whom, as they affirmed, it had been murmured by the mountain streams, and whispered by the wind among the tree-tops. The purport was, that, at some future day, a child should be born hereabouts, who was destined to become the greatest and noblest personage of his time, and whose countenance, in manhood, should bear an exact resemblance to the Great Stone Face. Not a few old-fashioned people, and young ones likewise, in the ardor of their hopes, still cherished an enduring faith in this old prophecy. But others, who had seen more of the world, had watched and waited till they were weary, and had beheld no man with such a face, nor any man that proved to be much greater or nobler than his neighbors, concluded

it to be nothing but an idle tale. At all events, the great man of the prophecy had not yet appeared.

“O mother, dear mother!” cried Ernest, clapping his hands above his head, “I do hope that I shall live to see him!”

His mother was an affectionate and thoughtful woman, and felt that it was wisest not to discourage the generous hopes of her little boy. So she only said to him, “Perhaps you may.”

And Ernest never forgot the story that his mother told him. It was always in his mind, whenever he looked upon the Great Stone Face. He spent his childhood in the log-cottage where he was born, and was dutiful to his mother, and helpful to her in many things, assisting her much with his little hands, and more with his loving heart. In this manner, from a happy yet often pensive¹³ child, he grew up to be a mild, quiet, unobtrusive¹⁴ boy, and sun-browned with labor in the fields, but with more intelligence brightening his aspect than is seen in many lads who have been taught at famous schools. Yet Ernest had had no teacher, save only that the Great Stone Face became one to him. When the toil of the day was over, he would gaze at it for hours, until he began to imagine that those vast features recognized him, and gave him a smile of kindness and encouragement, responsive to his own look of veneration.¹⁵ We must not take upon us to affirm that this was a mistake, although the Face may have looked no more kindly at Ernest than at all the world besides. But the secret was that the boy's tender and confiding simplicity discerned what other people could not see; and thus the love, which was meant for all, became his peculiar portion.

About this time there went a rumor throughout the valley, that the great man, foretold from ages long ago, who was to bear a resemblance to the Great Stone Face, had appeared at last. It seems that, many years before, a young man had migrated¹⁶ from the valley and settled at a distant seaport, where, after getting together a little money, he had set up as a shopkeeper. His name—but I could never learn whether it was his real one, or a nickname that had grown out of his habits and success in life—was Gathergold. Being shrewd and active, and endowed by Providence with that inscrutable faculty which develops itself in what the world calls luck, he became an exceedingly rich merchant, and owner of a whole fleet of bulky-bottomed ships.¹⁷ All the countries of the globe appeared to join hands for the mere purpose of adding heap after heap to the mountainous accumulation of this one man's wealth. The cold regions of the north, almost within the gloom and shadow of the Arctic Circle,¹⁸ sent him their tribute in the shape of furs; hot Africa sifted¹⁹ for him the golden sands of her rivers, and gathered up the ivory tusks of her great elephants out of the forests; the East came bringing him the rich shawls,²⁰ and spices,²¹ and teas, and the effulgence of diamonds, and the gleaming purity of large pearls. The ocean, not to be behindhand with the earth, yielded up her mighty whales,²² that Mr. Gathergold might sell their oil, and make a profit on it. Be the original commodity what it might, it was gold within his grasp. It might be said of him, as of Midas²³ in the fable, that whatever he touched with his finger immediately glistened, and grew yellow, and was changed at once into sterling metal, or, which suited him still better, into piles of coin. And, when Mr. Gathergold

had become so very rich that it would have taken him a hundred years only to count his wealth, he bethought himself of his native valley, and resolved to go back thither, and end his days where he was born. With this purpose in view, he sent a skilful architect to build him such a palace as should be fit for a man of his vast wealth to live in.

As I have said above, it had already been rumored in the valley that Mr. Gathergold had turned out to be the prophetic personage so long and vainly looked for, and that his visage was the perfect and undeniable similitude of the Great Stone Face. People were the more ready to believe that this must needs be the fact when they beheld the splendid edifice that rose, as if by enchantment,²⁴ on the site of his father's old weather-beaten farm-house. The exterior was of marble, so dazzlingly white that it seemed as though the whole structure might melt away in the sunshine, like those humbler ones which Mr. Gathergold, in his young play-days, before his fingers were gifted with the touch of transmutation,²⁵ had been accustomed to build of snow. It had a richly ornamented portico,²⁶ supported by tall pillars, beneath which was a lofty door, studded with silver knobs, and made of a kind of variegated wood that had been brought from beyond the sea. The windows, from the floor to the ceiling of each stately apartment, were composed, respectively, of but one enormous pane²⁷ of glass, so transparently pure that it was said to be a finer medium than even the vacant atmosphere. Hardly anybody had been permitted to see the interior of this palace; but it was reported, and with good semblance of truth, to be far more gorgeous than the outside, insomuch that whatever was iron or brass in other houses was

silver or gold in this; and Mr. Gathergold's bed-chamber, especially, made such a glittering appearance that no ordinary man would have been able to close his eyes there. But, on the other hand, Mr. Gathergold was now so inured²⁸ to wealth, that perhaps he could not have closed his eyes unless where the gleam of it was certain to find its way beneath his eyelids.

In due time, the mansion was finished; next came the upholsterers, with magnificent furniture; then, a whole troop of black²⁹ and white servants, the harbingers³⁰ of Mr. Gathergold, who, in his own majestic person, was expected to arrive at sunset. Our friend Ernest, meanwhile, had been deeply stirred by the idea that the great man, the noble man, the man of prophecy, after so many ages of delay, was at length to be made manifest to his native valley. He knew, boy as he was, that there were a thousand ways in which Mr. Gathergold, with his vast wealth, might transform himself into an angel³¹ of beneficence, and assume a control over human affairs as wide and benignant as the smile of the Great Stone Face. Full of faith and hope, Ernest doubted not that what the people said was true, and that now he was to behold the living likeness of those wondrous features on the mountain-side. While the boy was still gazing up the valley, and fancying, as he always did, that the Great Stone Face returned his gaze and looked kindly at him, the rumbling of wheels was heard, approaching swiftly along the winding road.

"Here he comes!" cried a group of people who were assembled to witness the arrival. "Here comes the great Mr. Gathergold!"

A carriage, drawn by four horses, dashed round the

turn of the road. Within it, thrust partly out of the window, appeared the physiognomy³² of the old man, with a skin as yellow as if his own Midas-hand had transmuted it. He had a low forehead, small, sharp eyes, puckered about with innumerable wrinkles, and very thin lips, which he made still thinner by pressing them forcibly together.

"The very image of the Great Stone Face!" shouted the people. "Sure enough, the old prophecy is true; and here we have the great man come, at last!"

And, what greatly perplexed Ernest, they seemed actually to believe that here was the likeness which they spoke of. By the roadside there chanced to be an old beggar-woman and two little beggar-children, stragglers from some far-off region, who, as the carriage rolled onward, held out their hands and lifted up their doleful³³ voices, most piteously beseeching charity. A yellow claw—the very same that had clawed together so much wealth—poked itself out of the coach-window, and dropt some copper coins upon the ground; so that, though the great man's name seems to have been Gathergold, he might just as suitably have been nicknamed Scattercopper. Still, nevertheless, with an earnest shout, and evidently with as much good faith as ever, the people bellowed,—

"He is the very image of the Great Stone Face!"

But Ernest turned sadly³⁴ from the wrinkled shrewdness of that sordid visage,³⁵ and gazed up the valley, where, amid a gathering mist, gilded by the last sunbeams, he could still distinguish those glorious features which had impressed themselves into his soul. Their aspect cheered him. What did the benign lips seem to say?

“He will come! Fear not, Ernest; the man will come!”

The years went on, and Ernest ceased to be a boy. He had grown to be a young man now. He attracted little notice from the other inhabitants of the valley; for they saw nothing remarkable in his way of life, save that, when the labor of the day was over, he still loved to go apart and gaze and meditate upon the Great Stone Face. According to their idea of the matter, it was a folly, indeed, but pardonable, inasmuch as Ernest was industrious, kind, and neighborly, and neglected no duty for the sake of indulging this idle habit. They knew not that the Great Stone Face had become a teacher to him, and that the sentiment which was expressed in it would enlarge the young man's heart, and fill it with wider and deeper sympathies than other hearts. They knew not³⁶ that thence would come a better wisdom than could be learned from books, and a better life than could be moulded on the defaced example of other human lives. Neither did Ernest know that the thoughts and affections which came to him so naturally, in the fields and at the fireside, and wherever he communed³⁷ with himself, were of a higher tone than those which all men shared with him. A simple soul,—simple as when his mother first taught him the old prophecy,—he beheld the marvelous features beaming adown the valley, and still wondered that their human counterpart was so long in making his appearance.

By this time poor Mr. Gathergold was dead and buried; and the oddest part of the matter was, that his wealth, which was the body and spirit of his existence, had disappeared before his death, leaving nothing of him but a living skeleton, covered over

with a wrinkled, yellow skin. Since the melting away of his gold, it had been very generally conceded that there was no such striking resemblance, after all, betwixt the ignoble³⁸ features of the ruined merchant and that majestic face upon the mountain-side. So the people ceased to honor him during his lifetime, and quietly consigned him to forgetfulness after his decease. Once in a while, it is true, his memory was brought up in connection with the magnificent palace which he had built, and which had long ago been turned into a hotel for the accommodation of strangers, multitudes of whom came, every summer, to visit that famous natural curiosity, the Great Stone Face. Thus, Mr. Gathergold being discredited and thrown into the shade, the man of prophecy was yet to come.

It so happened that a native-born son of the valley, many years before, had enlisted as a soldier, and, after a great deal of hard fighting, had now become an illustrious commander. Whatever he may be called in history, he was known in camps and on the battle-field under the nickname of Old Blood-and-Thunder.³⁹ This war-worn veteran, being now infirm with age and wounds, and weary of the turmoil⁴⁰ of a military life, and of the roll of the drum and the clangor of the trumpet, that had so long been ringing in his ears, had lately signified a purpose of returning to his native valley, hoping to find repose where he remembered to have left it. The inhabitants, his old neighbors and their grown-up children, were resolved to welcome the renowned warrior with a salute of cannon and a public dinner; and all the more enthusiastically, it being affirmed that now, at last, the likeness of the Great Stone Face had actually appeared. An aid-de-camp⁴¹ of Old Blood-and-Thunder, travelling

through the valley, was said to have been struck with the resemblance. Moreover the schoolmates and early acquaintances of the general were ready to testify, on oath, that, to the best of their recollection, the aforesaid general had been exceedingly like the majestic image, even when a boy, only that the idea had never occurred to them at that period. Great, therefore, was the excitement throughout the valley; and many people, who had never once thought of glancing at the Great Stone Face for years before, now spent their time in gazing at it, for the sake of knowing exactly how General Blood-and-Thunder looked.

On the day of the great festival, Ernest, with all the other people of the valley, left their work, and proceeded to the spot where the sylvan⁴² banquet was prepared. As he approached, the loud voice of the Rev. Dr. Battleblast was heard, beseeching a blessing on the good things set before them, and on the distinguished friend of peace in whose honor they were assembled. The tables were arranged in a cleared space of the woods, shut in by the surrounding trees, except where a vista⁴³ opened eastward, and afforded a distant view of the Great Stone Face. Over the general's chair, which was a relic from the home of Washington,⁴⁴ there was an arch of verdant boughs, with the laurel⁴⁵ profusely intermixed, and surmounted by his country's banner, beneath which he had won his victories. Our friend Ernest raised himself on his tiptoes, in hopes to get a glimpse of the celebrated guest; but there was a mighty crowd about the tables anxious to hear the toasts⁴⁶ and speeches, and to catch any word that might fall from the general in reply; and a volunteer company, doing duty as a guard, pricked ruthlessly⁴⁷ with their bayonets at any partic-

ularly quiet person among the throng. So Ernest, being of an unobtrusive character, was thrust quite into the background, where he could see no more of Old Blood-and-Thunder's physiognomy than if it had been still blazing on the battle-field. To console himself, he turned towards the Great Stone Face, which, like a faithful and long-remembered friend, looked back and smiled upon him through the vista of the forest. Meantime, however, he could overhear the remarks of various individuals, who were comparing the features of the hero with the face on the distant mountain-side.

"'T is the same face, to a hair!" cried one man, cutting a caper⁴⁸ for joy.

"Wonderfully like, that's a fact!" responded another.

"Like! why, I call it Old Blood-and-Thunder himself, in a monstrous looking-glass!" cried a third. "And why not? He's the greatest man of this or any other age, beyond a doubt."

And then all three of the speakers gave a great shout, which communicated electricity⁴⁹ to the crowd, and called forth a roar from a thousand voices, that went reverberating⁵⁰ for miles among the mountains, until you might have supposed that the Great Stone Face had poured its thunder-breath into the cry. All these comments, and this vast enthusiasm, served the more to interest our friend; nor did he think of questioning that now, at length, the mountain-visage had found its human counterpart. It is true, Ernest had imagined that this long-looked-for personage would appear in the character of a man of peace, uttering wisdom, and doing good, and making people happy. But, taking an habitual breadth of view with all his

simplicity, he contended that Providence⁵¹ should choose its own method of blessing mankind, and could conceive that this great end might be effected even by a warrior and a bloody sword, should inscrutable⁵² wisdom see fit to order matters so.

"The general! the general!" was now the cry. "Hush! silence! Old Blood-and-Thunder's going to make a speech."

Even so; for, the cloth being removed, the general's health had been drunk, amid shouts of applause, and he now stood upon his feet to thank the company. Ernest saw him. There he was, over the shoulders of the crowd, from the two glittering epaulets⁵³ and embroidered collar upward, beneath the arch of green boughs with intertwined laurel, and the banner drooping as if to shade his brow! And there, too, visible in the same glance, through the vista of the forest, appeared the Great Stone Face! And was there, indeed, such a resemblance as the crowd had testified? Alas, Ernest could not recognize it! He beheld a war-worn and weather-beaten countenance, full of energy, and expressive of an iron will; but the gentle wisdom, the deep, broad, tender sympathies, were altogether wanting in Old Blood-and-Thunder's visage; and even if the Great Stone Face had assumed his look of stern command, the milder traits would still have tempered it.

"This is not the man of prophecy," sighed Ernest to himself, as he made his way out of the throng. "And must the world wait longer yet?"

The mists had congregated about the distant mountain-side, and there were seen the grand and awful features of the Great Stone Face, awful but benignant, as if a mighty angel were sitting among the hills,

and enrobing himself in a cloud-vesture of gold and purple. As he looked, Ernest could hardly believe but that a smile beamed over the whole visage, with a radiance still brightening, although without motion of the lips. It was probably the effect of the western sunshine, melting through the thinly diffused⁵⁴ vapors that had swept between him and the object that he gazed at. But—as it always did—the aspect of his marvellous friend made Ernest as hopeful as if he had never hoped in vain.

“Fear not, Ernest,” said his heart, even as if the Great Face were whispering him,—“fear not, Ernest; he will come.”

More years sped swiftly and tranquilly away. Ernest still dwelt in his native valley, and was now a man of middle age. By imperceptible⁵⁵ degrees, he had become known among the people. Now, as heretofore, he labored for his bread, and was the same simple-hearted man that he had always been. But he had thought and felt so much, he had given so many of the best hours of his life to unworldly hopes for some great good to mankind, that it seemed as though he had been talking with the angels, and had imbibed a portion of their wisdom unawares. It was visible in the calm and well-considered beneficence of his daily life, the quiet stream of which had made a wide green margin all along its course. Not a day passed by, that the world was not the better because this man, humble as he was, had lived. He never stepped aside from his own path, yet would always reach a blessing to his neighbor. Almost involuntarily, too, he had become a preacher. The pure and high simplicity of his thought, which, as one of its manifestations, took shape in the good deeds that dropped silent-

ly from his hand, flowed also forth in speech. He uttered truths that wrought upon and moulded the lives of those who heard him. His auditors, it may be, never suspected that Ernest, their own neighbor and familiar friend, was more than an ordinary man; least of all did Ernest himself suspect it; but, inevitably as the murmur of a rivulet, came thoughts out of his mouth that no other human lips had spoken.

When the people's minds had had a little time to cool, they were ready enough to acknowledge their mistake in imagining a similarity between General Blood-and-Thunder's truculent⁵⁶ physiognomy and the benign visage on the mountain-side. But now, again, there were reports and many paragraphs in the newspapers, affirming that the likeness of the Great Stone Face had appeared upon the broad shoulders of a certain eminent statesman. He, like Mr. Gathergold and Old Blood-and-Thunder, was a native of the valley, but had left it in his early days, and taken up the trades of law and politics. Instead of the rich man's wealth and the warrior's sword, he had but a tongue, and it was mightier⁵⁷ than both together. So wonderfully eloquent was he, that whatever he might choose to say, his auditors had no choice but to believe him; wrong looked like right, and right like wrong; for when it pleased him, he could make a kind of illuminated fog with his mere breath, and obscure the natural daylight with it. His tongue, indeed, was a magic instrument: sometimes it rumbled like the thunder; sometimes it warbled like the sweetest music. It was the blast of war,—the song of peace; and it seemed to have a heart in it, when there was no such matter. In good truth, he was a wondrous man; and when his tongue had acquired him all

other imaginable success,—when it had been heard in halls of state, and in the courts of princes and potentates,⁵⁸—after it had made him known all over the world, even as a voice crying from shore to shore,—it finally persuaded his countrymen to select him⁵⁹ for the Presidency. Before this time,—indeed, as soon as he began to grow celebrated,—his admirers had found out the resemblance between him and the Great Stone Face; and so much were they struck by it, that throughout the country this distinguished gentleman was known by the name of Old Stony Phiz. The phrase was considered as giving a highly favorable aspect to his political prospects; for, as is likewise the case with the Popedom,⁶⁰ nobody ever becomes President without taking a name⁶¹ other than his own.

While his friends were doing their best to make him President, Old Stony Phiz, as he was called, set out on a visit to the valley where he was born. Of course,⁶² he had no other object than to shake hands with his fellow-citizens, and neither thought nor cared about any effect which his progress through the country might have upon the election. Magnificent preparations were made to receive the illustrious statesman; a cavalcade⁶³ of horsemen set forth to meet him at the boundary line of the State, and all the people left their business and gathered along the wayside to see him pass. Among these was Ernest. Though more than once disappointed, as we have seen, he had such a hopeful and confiding nature, that he was always ready to believe in whatever seemed beautiful and good. He kept his heart continually open, and thus was sure to catch the blessing from on high when it should come. So now again, as buoyantly⁶⁴ as ever,

he went forth to behold the likeness of the Great Stone Face.

The cavalcade came prancing along the road, with a great clattering of hoofs and a mighty cloud of dust, which rose up so dense and high that the visage of the mountain-side was completely hidden from Ernest's eyes. All the great men of the neighborhood were there on horseback; militia⁶⁵ officers, in uniform; the member of Congress; the sheriff of the county; the editors of newspapers; and many a farmer, too, had mounted his patient steed, with his Sunday coat upon his back. It really was a very brilliant spectacle, especially as there were numerous banners flaunting over the cavalcade, on some of which were gorgeous portraits of the illustrious statesman and the Great Stone Face, smiling familiarly at one another, like two brothers. If the pictures were to be trusted, the mutual⁶⁶ resemblance, it must be confessed, was marvellous. We must not forget to mention that there was a band of music, which made the echoes of the mountains ring and reverberate with the loud triumph of its strains; so that airy and soul-thrilling melodies broke out among all the heights and hollows, as if every nook of his native valley had found a voice, to welcome the distinguished guest. But the grandest effect was when the far-off mountain precipice flung back the music; for then the Great Stone Face itself seemed to be swelling the triumphant chorus, in acknowledgement that, at length, the man of prophecy was come.

All this while the people were throwing up their hats and shouting, with enthusiasm so contagious⁶⁷ that the heart of Ernest kindled up, and he likewise threw up his hat, and shouted, as loudly as the loudest.

"Huzza for the great man! Huzza for Old Stony Phiz!" But as yet he had not seen him.

"Here he is, now!" cried those who stood near Ernest. "There! There! Look at Old Stony Phiz and then at the Old Man of the Mountain,⁶⁸ and see if they are not as like as two twin-brothers!"

In the midst of all this gallant array came an open barouche,⁶⁹ drawn by four white horses; and in the barouche, with his massive head uncovered, sat the illustrious statesman, Old Stony Phiz himself.

"Confess it," said one of Ernest's neighbors to him, "the Great Stone Face has met its match at last!"

Now, it must be owned that, at his first glimpse of the countenance which was bowing and smiling from the barouche, Ernest did fancy that there was a resemblance between it and the old familiar face upon the mountain-side. The brow, with its massive depth and loftiness, and all the other features, indeed, were boldly and strongly hewn, as if in emulation of a more than heroic,⁷⁰ of a Titanic model. But the sublimity and stateliness, the grand expression of a divine sympathy, that illuminated the mountain visage and etherealized⁷¹ its ponderous granite⁷² substance into spirit, might here be sought in vain. Something had been originally left out, or had departed. And therefore the marvellously gifted statesman had always a weary gloom in the deep caverns of his eyes, as of a child that has outgrown its playthings or a man of mighty faculties and little aims, whose life, with all its high performances, was vague and empty, because no high purpose had endowed⁷³ it with reality.

Still, Ernest's neighbor was thrusting his elbow into his side, and pressing him for an answer.

"Confess! confess! Is not he the very picture of your Old Man of the Mountain?"

"No!" said Ernest, bluntly, "I see little or no likeness."

"Then so much the worse for the Great Stone Face!" answered his neighbor; and again he set up a shout for Old Stony Phiz.

But Ernest turned away, melancholy, and almost despondent:⁷⁴ for this was the saddest of his disappointments, to behold a man who might have fulfilled the prophecy, and had not willed to do so. Meantime, the cavalcade, the banners, the music, and the barouches swept past him, with the vociferous⁷⁵ crowd in the rear, leaving the dust to settle down, and the Great Stone Face to be revealed again, with the grandeur that it had worn for untold centuries.

"Lo, here I am, Ernest!" the benign lips seemed to say. "I have waited longer than thou, and am not yet weary. Fear not; the man will come."

The years hurried onward, treading in their haste on one another's heels. And now they began to bring white hairs, and scatter them over the head of Ernest; they made reverend wrinkles across his forehead, and furrows in his cheeks. He was an aged man. But not in vain had he grown old: more than the white hairs on his head were the sage thoughts in his mind; his wrinkles and furrows were inscriptions that Time had graved, and in which he had written legends of wisdom that had been tested by the tenor⁷⁶ of a life. And Ernest had ceased to be obscure. Unsought for, undesired, had come the fame which so many seek, and made him known in the great world, beyond the limits of the valley in which he had dwelt so quietly. College professors, and even the active men of cities,

came from far to see and converse with Ernest; for the report had gone abroad that this simple husband-man⁷⁷ had ideas unlike those of other men, not gained from books, but of a higher tone,—a tranquil and familiar majesty, as if he had been talking with the angels as his daily friends. Whether it were sage,⁷⁸ statesman, or philanthropist,⁷⁹ Ernest received these visitors with the gentle sincerity that had characterized him from boyhood, and spoke freely with them of whatever came uppermost, or lay deepest in his heart or their own. While they talked together, his face would kindle, unawares, and shine upon them, as with a mild evening light. Pensive with the fulness of such discourse, his guests took leave and went their way; and passing up the valley, paused to look at the Great Stone Face, imagining that they had seen its likeness in a human countenance, but could not remember⁸⁰ where.

While Ernest had been growing up and growing old, a bountiful Providence had granted a new poet to this earth. He, likewise, was a native of the valley, but had spent the greater part of his life at a distance from that romantic region, pouring out his sweet music amid the bustle and din of cities. Often, however, did the mountains which had been familiar to him in his childhood lift their snowy peaks into the clear atmosphere of his poetry. Neither was the Great Stone Face forgotten, for the poet had celebrated it in an ode,⁸¹ which was grand enough to have been uttered by its own majestic lips. This man of genius, we may say, had come down from heaven with wonderful endowments. If he sang of a mountain, the eyes of all mankind beheld a mightier grandeur reposing on its breast, or soaring to its summit, than

had before been seen⁸² there. If his theme were a lovely lake, a celestial smile had now been thrown over it, to gleam forever on its surface. If it were the vast old sea, even the deep immensity of its dread bosom seemed to swell the higher, as if moved by the emotions of the song. Thus the world assumed another and better aspect from the hour that the poet blessed it with his happy eyes. The Creator had bestowed him, as the last best touch to his own handiwork. Creation was not finished till the poet came to interpret, and so complete it.

The effect was no less high and beautiful, when his human brethren were the subject of his verse. The man or woman, sordid with the common dust of life, who crossed his daily path, and the little child who played in it, were glorified if he beheld them in his mood of poetic faith. He showed the golden links of the great chain that intertwined them with an angelic kindred; he brought out the hidden traits of a celestial⁸³ birth that made them worthy of such kin. Some, indeed, there were, who thought to show the soundness of their judgment by affirming that all the beauty and dignity of the natural world existed only in the poet's fancy. Let such men speak for themselves, who undoubtedly appear to have been spawned⁸⁴ forth by nature with a contemptuous bitterness; she having plastered them up out of her refuse stuff, after all the swine were made. As respects all things else, the poet's ideal was the truest truth.

The songs of this poet found their way to Ernest. He read them after his customary toil, seated on the bench before his cottage-door, where for such a length of time he had filled his repose with thought, by gazing at the Great Stone Face. And now as he read

stanzas that caused the soul to thrill within him, he lifted his eyes to the vast countenance beaming on him so benignantly.

"O majestic friend," he murmured, addressing the Great Stone Face, "is not this man worthy to resemble thee?"

The Face seemed to smile, but answered not a word.

Now it happened that the poet, though he dwelt so far away, had not only heard of Ernest, but had meditated much upon his character, until he deemed nothing so desirable as to meet this man, whose untaught wisdom walked hand in hand with the noble simplicity of his life. One summer morning, therefore, he took passage by the railroad, and, in the decline of the afternoon, alighted from the cars at no great distance from Ernest's cottage. The great hotel, which had formerly been the palace of Mr. Gathergold, was close at hand, but the poet, with his carpet-bag⁸⁵ on his arm, inquired at once where Ernest dwelt, and was resolved to be accepted as his guest.

Approaching the door, he there found the good old man, holding a volume in his hand, which alternately he read, and then, with a finger between the leaves, looked lovingly at the Great Stone Face.

"Good evening," said the poet. "Can you give a traveller a night's lodging?"

"Willingly," answered Ernest; and then he added, smiling, "Methinks I never saw the Great Stone Face look so hospitably at a stranger."

The poet sat down on the bench beside him, and he and Ernest talked together. Often had the poet held intercourse with the wittiest and the wisest, but never before with a man like Ernest, whose thoughts and feelings gushed up with such a natural freedom, and

who made great truths so familiar by his simple utterance of them. Angels, as had been so often said, seemed to have wrought with him at his labor in the fields; angels seemed to have sat with him by the fireside; and, dwelling with angels as friend with friends, he had imbibed the sublimity of their ideas, and imbued it with the sweet and lowly charm of household words. So thought the poet. And Ernest, on the other hand, was moved and agitated by the living images which the poet flung out of his mind, and which peopled all the air about the cottage-door with shapes of beauty, both gay and pensive. The sympathies of these two men instructed them with a profounder sense than either could have attained alone. Their minds accorded into one strain, and made delightful music which neither of them could have claimed as all his own, nor distinguished his own share from the other's. They led one another, as it were, into a high pavilion⁸⁶ of their thoughts, so remote, and hitherto so dim, that they had never entered it before, and so beautiful that they desired to be there always.

As Ernest listened to the poet, he imagined that the Great Stone Face was bending forward to listen too. He gazed earnestly into the poet's glowing eyes.

"Who are you, my strangely gifted guest?" he said.

The poet laid his finger on the volume that Ernest had been reading.

"You have read these poems," said he. "You know me, then,—for I wrote them."

Again, and still more earnestly than before, Ernest examined the poet's features; then turned towards the Great Stone Face; then back, with an uncertain as-

pect, to his guest. But his countenance fell; he shook his head, and sighed.

"Wherefore are you sad?" inquired the poet.

"Because," replied Ernest, "all through life I have awaited the fulfilment of a prophecy; and, when I read these poems, I hoped that it might be fulfilled in you."

"You hoped," answered the poet, faintly smiling, "to find in me the likeness of the Great Stone Face. And you are disappointed, as formerly with Mr. Gathergold, and Old Blood-and-Thunder, and Old Stony Phiz. Yes Ernest, it is my doom. You must add my name to the illustrious three, and record another failure of your hopes. For—in shame and sadness do I speak it, Ernest—I am not worthy to be typified by yonder benign and majestic image."

"And why?" asked Ernest. He pointed to the volume. "Are not those thoughts divine?"

"They have a strain of the Divinity," replied the poet. "You can hear in them the far-off echo of a heavenly song. But my life, dear Ernest, has not corresponded with my thought. I have had grand dreams, but they have been only dreams, because I have lived—and that, too, by my own choice—among poor and mean realities. Sometimes even—shall I dare to say it?—I lack faith in the grandeur, the beauty, and the goodness, which my own works are said to have made more evident in nature and in human life. Why, then, pure seeker of the good and true, shouldst thou⁸⁷ hope to find me, in yonder image of the divine?"

The poet spoke sadly, and his eyes were dim with tears. So, likewise, were those of Ernest.

At the hour of sunset, as had long been his frequent

custom, Ernest was to discourse to an assemblage of the neighboring inhabitants in the open air. He and the poet, arm in arm, still talking together as they went along, proceeded to the spot. It was a small nook among the hills, with a gray precipice behind, the stern front of which was relieved by the pleasant foliage of many creeping plants that made a tapestry⁸⁸ for the naked rock, by hanging their festoons from all its rugged angles. At a small elevation above the ground, set in a rich framework of verdure, there appeared a niche,⁸⁹ spacious enough to admit a human figure, with freedom for such gestures as spontaneously accompany earnest thought and genuine emotion. Into this natural pulpit⁹⁰ Ernest ascended, and threw a look of familiar kindness around upon his audience. They stood, or sat, or reclined upon the grass, as seemed good to each, with the departing sunshine falling obliquely over them, and mingling its subdued cheerfulness with the solemnity of the grove of ancient trees, beneath and amid the boughs of which the golden rays were constrained to pass. In another direction was seen the Great Stone Face, with the same cheer, combined with the same solemnity, in its benignant aspect.

Ernest began to speak, giving to the people of what was in his heart and mind. His words had power, because they accorded with his thoughts; and his thoughts had reality and depth, because they harmonized with the life which he had always lived. It was not mere breath that this preacher uttered; they were the words of life, because a life of good deeds and holy love was melted into them. Pearls, pure and rich, had been dissolved into this precious draught. The poet, as he listened, felt that the being and char-

acter of Ernest were a nobler strain of poetry than he had ever written. His eyes glistening with tears, he gazed reverentially at the venerable man, and said within himself that never was there an aspect so worthy of a prophet and a sage as that mild, sweet, thoughtful countenance, with the glory of white hair diffused about it. At a distance, but distinctly to be seen, high up in the golden light of the setting sun, appeared the Great Stone Face, with hoary mists around it, like the white hairs around the brow of Ernest. Its look of grand beneficence seemed to embrace the world.

At that moment, in sympathy with a thought which he was about to utter, the face of Ernest assumed a grandeur of expression, so imbued⁹¹ with benevolence, that the poet, by an irresistible impulse, threw his arms aloft, and shouted,—

“Behold! Behold! Ernest is himself the likeness of the Great Stone Face!”

Then all the people looked, and saw that what the deep-sighted poet said was true. The prophecy was fulfilled. But Ernest, having finished what he had to say, took the poet’s arm, and walked slowly homeward, still hoping that some wiser and better man than himself would by and by appear, bearing a resemblance to the GREAT STONE FACE.

NOTES

1. **congregated.** Assembled.
2. **populous.** See note 73, p. 276.
3. **cotton-factories.** The rocky farms of New England were from the earliest days too barren to yield a sufficient livelihood for the inhabitants, so the New Englanders used the water-

falls to turn millwheels and began the industries which have grown until New England is our chief manufacturing region.

The cotton cultivated in the South by the slaves was shipped to New England to be spun and woven.

4. **phenomenon.** An extraordinary object.
5. **perpendicular.** See note 53, p. 275.
6. **countenance.** Face. (It is not unusual for objects in nature to resemble men or animals.) Almost everybody has seen pictures in the embers of a fire. Hamlet and his friend commented on the likeness of the clouds to a camel and a whale. In the Garden of the Gods at Colorado Springs the eroded rocks have been named on account of their likeness to animate objects.
7. **Titan.** According to Greek mythology the Titans were lawless deities who were conquered by the thunderbolts of Jupiter and who piled mountains upon mountains in their vain attempt to scale the skies.
8. **precipice.** See note 43, p. 275.
9. **chaotic.** Disordered.
10. **benign.** Gentle.
11. **prophecy.** An inspired foretelling of something to happen in the future.
12. **Indians.** The Abenaki tribe inhabited the region around the White Mountains. They had no legend about the Old Man of the Mountain.
13. **pensive.** Calm and thoughtful.
14. **unobtrusive.** Not thrusting one's self forward offensively.
15. **veneration.** Solemn respect.
16. **migrated.** Changed his residence. The root word of immigrated and emigrated.
17. **ships.** New England was the original centre of commerce in America. The clipper ships from her ports circled the earth.
18. **Arctic circle.** An imaginary line around the North Pole within the limits of which the sun

does not rise for one or more whole days in winter and does not set for the same period in summer.

19. **sifted.** The primitive method of gold mining is to wash the gold dust out of the sand of streams.
20. **shawls.** Cashmere shawls, imported from Cashmere, a state in India.
21. **spices.** Spices were eagerly sought because they were needed to keep meat from spoiling before the use of ice for that purpose became general.
22. **whales.** Before the discovery of petroleum, houses were lighted by candles made from whale oil. The prosperity of the New England seaports depended to a great extent upon the whaling industry.
23. **Midas.** According to a Greek legend, King Midas wished that everything he touched might turn to gold. His wish was granted. His food and even his daughter turned to gold, and Midas was glad to rid himself of his fatal power. This he did by bathing in a river which ever afterward had golden sand. Hawthorne has himself given us the most charming version of the story.
24. **enchantment.** Magic.
25. **transmutation.** The power long sought by alchemists of changing base metals such as lead and iron, into the precious metals, silver and gold.
26. **portico.** A handsome porch with a roof which is held up by pillars.
27. **one enormous pane.** When plate glass was first manufactured, it was very costly.
28. **inured.** Accustomed.
29. **black servants.** The negro servants of the North were freemen even when slavery existed in the South.
30. **harbingers.** Forerunners.

31. **angel.** A celestial being more intelligent and more powerful than a human being.
32. **physiognomy.** Face. Abbreviated in the nickname "Old Stony Phiz."
33. **doleful.** Piteous. The reader will note that dole, which once meant grief, now means alms.
34. **turned sadly.** Ernest, who saw more in the Great Stone Face than did the older people of the village, was likewise able to see more than they did in the face of the miser.
35. **sordid.** See note 99, p. 237.
36. **They knew not.** A hint of the conclusion of the story.
37. **communed.** Held intimate conversation.
38. **ignoble.** Not noble, base.
39. **Old Blood-and-Thunder.** No general known to history received this expressive sobriquet, but General Andrew Jackson, who was known as "Old Hickory," and General Zachary Taylor, who was known as "Old Rough and Ready," had nicknames of similar meaning.
40. **turmoil.** Worry and confusion.
41. **aid-de-camp.** An officer who serves as assistant to a general.
42. **sylvan.** Rustic.
43. **vista.** A long view through lines of trees.
44. **the home of Washington.** Mount Vernon on the bank of the Potomac River.
45. **laurel.** An evergreen shrub. In ancient Greece the laurel was sacred to Apollo, the god of song and manly beauty. It was, therefore, used for wreaths of honor with which poets, victors at sport, and the heroes of war were crowned.
46. **toasts.** Wishes for health and happiness.
47. **ruthlessly.** Pitilessly.
48. **cutting a caper.** Prancing about in goat-like antics. (*caper* means goat).
49. **electricity.** Animation.
50. **reverberating.** Echoing.
51. **Providence.** God.

52. **inscrutable.** Beyond understanding.
53. **epaulets.** Ornaments worn on the shoulders of an officer.
54. **diffused.** Spread out.
55. **imperceptible.** Too slight to be distinguished.
56. **truculent.** Ferocious.
57. **mightier.** An allusion to the proverb, "The pen is mightier than the sword."
58. **potentates.** Rulers.
59. **select.** Nominate.
60. **Popedom.** The dominion of the Pope, who is the head of the Roman Catholic Church.
61. **taking a name.** Washington was called The Father of His Country; Lincoln was called Honest Abe; and many other of the earlier presidents bore popular nicknames.
62. **Of course, etc.** This is irony, the figure of speech in which words mean the opposite of what they say.
63. **cavalcade.** A parade of people on horseback.
64. **buoyantly.** Lightheartedly.
65. **militia.** Citizens enrolled as soldiers; not regular troops.
66. **mutual.** Interchangeable.
67. **contagious.** Catching; spreading from one to another.
68. **Old Man of the Mountain.** The celebrated Profile in the White Mountains.
69. **barouche.** A carriage, the top of which lets down. There is a seat for the driver and two seats facing each other for passengers.
70. **more than heroic.** Colossal. In sculpture statues larger than life are called heroic. Those very large, like the Statue of Liberty enlightening the World, are called colossal.
71. **etherealized.** Made light and airy.
72. **granite.** A hard rock composed of quartz, feldspar, and mica.
73. **endowed.** Furnished.
74. **despondent.** Downhearted.
75. **vociferous.** Noisy.

76. **tenor.** Constant course.
77. **husbandman.** Farmer.
78. **sage.** See note 67, p. 235.
79. **philanthropist.** See note 90, p. 236.
80. **could not remember.** A hint as to the conclusion.
81. **ode.** A poem of lofty sentiment.
82. **than had before been seen** in what Wordsworth calls
 "The light that never was, on sea or land;
 The consecration, and the poet's dream."
83. **celestial.** Heavenly.
84. **spawned.** Deposited as frogs and fishes do their eggs.
85. **carpet-bag.** A valise made of carpet.
86. **pavilion.** A tent or a lofty building with but a single room.
87. **shouldst thou.** It was natural for the poet to use this mode of address.
88. **tapestry.** A woven ornamental hanging to cover a wall.
89. **niche.** A cavity in a wall.
90. **pulpit.** The elevated place where a preacher stands.
91. **imbued.** Tinged.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS

I.

Rewrite the following sentences retaining the word or words in *italics* which make correct statements.

Do Not Mark the Book

1. The names Hawthorne gives the characters in *The Great Stone Face* remind one of the names used by *Irving, Dickens, Hale*.
2. *The Great Stone Face is a true story; founded on fact; adapted from another writer; true to life.*

3. Except Ernest, the finest appearing person in the story is the *orator; general; poet; merchant-prince.*
4. The story says Old Stony Phiz *was elected President; does not say; failed to secure the nomination; was defeated.*
5. *Mr. Gathergold; Old Stony Phiz; Old Rough and Ready; no one* tried to make the villagers think he looked like the Great Stone Face.
6. Ernest saw *nothing; more than others; less than others; the same as others;* in the Old Stone Face.
7. Ernest gained his wisdom by *reading; talking with his neighbors; studying the Great Stone Face; thinking for himself.*
8. The villagers did not notice a resemblance between Ernest and the Great Stone Face because *there was none; they were too busy; no one pointed it out to them; it is impossible to tell a person's character by his face; only the noble can recognize nobility; they were too familiar with him.*
9. The villagers *agreed with; contradicted; doubted; argued with* the poet when he said Ernest looked like the Great Stone Face.
10. The purpose of the story is to teach that:
Home keeping hearts are happiest.
Practise what you preach.
If you gaze at a statue long enough you will look like it.
It is not necessary to go to college to become great.

II

Prepare a true-false test as follows: Write sentences like the examples given, some true, some false.

Let students distinguish the true from the false statements. To penalize guessing, deduct the number of wrong answers from the number of correct answers. The difference is the score.

1. The marble house Mr. Gathergold built proved of benefit to the village. **True.**
2. The orator, Old Stony Phiz, employed his eloquence only in righteous causes. **False.**

III.

Complete the following statements.

Do Not Mark the Book

1. Public opinion in the valley was ————.
2. The villagers ———— were wrong in saying that ————.
3. Ernest was unable ————.
4. Although he was disappointed because the general did not look like the Great Stone Face, nevertheless Ernest ————.
5. Ernest ———— when he thought the villagers mistaken in identifying one of the great men who had lived in the valley with the Great Stone Face.
6. The poet was the first person ————.
7. The poet's life was ———— his poetry.
8. Ernest ———— that he himself had fulfilled the ancient prophesy.

IV.

1. Prepare a topical outline of the story.
2. List the persons whose faces were compared with the Great Stone Face and tell :
 - (a) What strength or weakness of character each has.
 - (b) Why each left the valley.
 - (c) Why each returned to it.
3. Try to suggest a better name for each character ; or tell why each character has an appropriate name. Do not forget the poet.
4. Select from the story passages which illustrate Hawthorne's (a) love of nature ; (b) insight into character ; (c) humor ; (d) gloomy view of life ; elegant language.
5. Copy the passages which make good quotations to put into the album of a friend.
6. Memorize the passage you like best.

FRANK STOCKTON

FRANK STOCKTON, an American humorist, was born April 5, 1834 and died April 20, 1902. After graduating from high school he became a wood engraver, but his talent for writing would not let him rest. He published a number of pieces in various magazines and eventually he became assistant editor of *St. Nicholas*.

His fanciful tales for children made him very popular. He became a skillful writer of short stories. His writings for young and old alike are characterized by a delicate yet exuberant fancy.

The *Lady or The Tiger* is known wherever short stories are read. No collection of tales can be considered complete without it. The outstanding characteristic of the story is that it is a puzzle. Often an author keeps the reader in suspense by hints of more than one ending of his story, and as the story proceeds he introduces clues so that the reader may know at the last how the story will end.

In *The Lady or The Tiger* the reasons for either of the possible endings are balanced so carefully that one cannot know what conclusion the author had in mind. The skillful construction of the story is not its only merit. The author has an insight into character and human affairs, and he shows the reader the humor of life, which is always mingled with pathos. The monarch's semi-barbaric tribunal is no more fatuous than those historic methods of determining guilt or innocence by means of fire, water, or the prowess of armed champions.

THE LADY OR THE TIGER?

IN the very olden time, there lived a semi-barbaric¹ king, whose ideas, though somewhat polished and sharpened by the progressiveness of distant Latin² neighbors, were still large, florid, and untrammelled, as became the half of him which was barbaric. He was a man of exuberant³ fancy, and, withal, of an authority so irresistible that, at his will, he turned his varied fancies into facts. He was greatly given to self-communing,⁴ and when he and himself agreed upon anything, the thing was done. When every member of his domestic and political systems moved smoothly in its appointed course, his nature was bland and genial; but whenever there was a little hitch, and some of his orbs⁵ got out of their orbits, he was blander and more genial still, for nothing pleased him so much as to make the crooked straight, and crush down uneven places.

Among the borrowed notions by which his barbarism had become semified was that of the public arena,⁶ in which, by exhibitions of manly and beastly valor, the minds of his subjects were refined and cultured.

But even here the exuberant and barbaric fancy asserted itself. The arena of the king was built, not to give the people an opportunity of hearing the rhapsodies⁷ of dying gladiators⁸ nor to enable them to view the inevitable conclusion of a conflict between religious opinions and hungry jaws, but for purposes far better adapted to widen and develop the mental energies

of the people. This vast amphitheatre,⁹ with its encircling galleries, its mysterious vaults, and its unseen passages, was an agent of poetic justice, in which crime was punished, or virtue rewarded, by the decrees of an impartial and incorruptible¹⁰ chance.

When a subject was accused of a crime of sufficient importance to interest the king, public notice was given that on an appointed day the fate of the accused person would be decided in the king's arena—a structure which well deserved its name; for, although its form and plan were borrowed from afar, its purpose emanated solely from the brain of this man, who, every barleycorn¹¹ a king, knew no tradition to which he owed more allegiance than pleased his fancy, and who ingrafted on every adopted form of human thought and action the rich growth of his barbaric idealism.

When all the people had assembled in the galleries, and the king, surrounded by his court, sat high up on his throne of royal state on one side of the arena, he gave a signal, a door beneath him opened, and the accused subject stepped out into the amphitheatre. Directly opposite him, on the other side of the enclosed space, were two doors, exactly alike and side by side. It was the duty and the privilege of the person on trial to walk directly to these doors and open one of them. He could open either door he pleased. He was subject to no guidance or influence but that of the aforementioned impartial and incorruptible chance. If he opened the one, there came out of it a hungry tiger, the fiercest and most cruel that could be procured, which immediately sprang upon him, and tore him to pieces, as a punishment for his guilt. The moment that the case of the criminal was thus decided, doleful iron bells were clanged, great wails went up from the

hired mourners¹² posted on the outer rim of the arena, and the vast audience, with bowed heads and downcast hearts, wended slowly their homeward way, mourning greatly that one so young and fair, or so old and respected, should have merited so dire a fate.

But if the accused person opened the other door, there came forth from it a lady, the most suitable to his years and station that his Majesty could select among his fair subjects; and to this lady he was immediately married, as a reward of his innocence. It mattered not that he might already possess a wife and family, or that his affections might be engaged upon an object of his own selection. The king allowed no such subordinate arrangements to interfere with his great scheme of retribution and reward. The exercises, as in the other instance, took place immediately, and in the arena. Another door opened beneath the king, and a priest, followed by a band of choristers, and dancing maidens blowing joyous airs on golden horns and treading an epithalamic¹³ measure, advanced to where the pair stood side by side, and the wedding was promptly and cheerily solemnized. Then the gay brass bells rang forth their merry peals, the people shouted glad hurrahs, and the innocent man, preceded by children strewing flowers on his path, led his bride to his home.

This was the king's semi-barbaric method of administering justice. Its perfect fairness is obvious. The criminal could not know out of which door would come the lady. He opened either he pleased, without having the slightest idea whether, in the next instant, he was to be devoured or married. On some occasions the tiger came out of one door, and on some out of the other. The decisions of this tribunal¹⁴ were not

only fair—they were positively determinate.¹⁵ The accused person was instantly punished if he found himself guilty, and if innocent he was rewarded on the spot, whether he liked it or not. There was no escape from the judgments of the king's arena.

The institution was a very popular one. When the people gathered together on one of the great trial days, they never knew whether they were to witness a bloody slaughter or a hilarious¹⁶ wedding. This element of uncertainty lent an interest to the occasion which it could not otherwise have attained. Thus the masses were entertained and pleased, and the thinking part of the community could bring no charge of unfairness against this plan; for did not the accused person have the whole matter in his own hands?

This semi-barbaric king had a daughter as blooming as his most florid fancies, and with a soul as fervent and imperious as his own. As is usual in such cases, she was the apple of his eye,¹⁷ and was loved by him above all humanity. Among his courtiers was a young man of that fineness of blood and lowness of station common to the conventional heroes¹⁸ of romance who love royal maidens. This royal maiden was well satisfied with her lover, for he was handsome and brave to a degree unsurpassed in all this kingdom, and she loved him with an ardor that had enough of barbarism in it to make it exceedingly warm and strong. This love affair moved on happily for many months, until, one day, the king happened to discover its existence. He did not hesitate nor waver in regard to his duty in the premises. The youth was immediately cast into prison, and a day was appointed for his trial in the king's arena. This, of course, was an especially important occasion, and his Majesty, as well as all the

people, was greatly interested in the workings and development of this trial. Never before had such a case occurred—never before had a subject dared to love the daughter of a king. In after years such things became commonplace enough, but then they were, in no slight degree, novel and startling.

The tiger cages of the kingdom were searched for the most savage and relentless beasts, from which the fiercest monster might be selected for the arena, and the ranks of maiden youth and beauty throughout the land were carefully surveyed by competent judges, in order that the young man might have a fitting bride in case fate did not determine for him a different destiny. Of course, everybody knew that the deed with which the accused was charged had been done. He had loved the princess, and neither he, she, nor any one else thought of denying the fact. But the king would not think of allowing any fact of this kind to interfere with the workings of the tribunal, in which he took such great delight and satisfaction. No matter how the affair turned out, the youth would be disposed of, and the king would take an æsthetic¹⁹ pleasure in watching the course of events which would determine whether or not the young man had done wrong in allowing himself to love the princess.

The appointed day arrived. From far and near the people gathered, and thronged the great galleries of the arena, while crowds, unable to gain admittance, massed themselves against its outside walls. The king and his court were in their places, opposite the twin doors—those fateful portals, so terrible in their similarity!

All was ready. The signal was given. A door beneath the royal party opened, and the lover of the

princess walked into the arena. Tall, beautiful, fair, his appearance was greeted with a low hum of admiration and anxiety. Half the audience had not known so grand a youth had lived among them. No wonder the princess loved him! What a terrible thing for him to be there!

As the youth advanced into the arena, he turned, as the custom was, to bow to the king. But he did not think at all of that royal personage; his eyes were fixed upon the princess, who sat to the right of her father. Had it not been for the moiety²⁰ of barbarism in her nature, it is probable that lady would not have been there. But her intense and fervid soul would not allow her to be absent on an occasion in which she was so terribly interested. From the moment that the decree had gone forth that her lover should decide his fate in the king's arena, she had thought of nothing, night or day, but this great event and the various subjects connected with it. Possessed of more power, influence, and force of character than any one who had ever before been interested in such a case, she had done what no other person had done—she had possessed herself of the secret of the doors. She knew in which of the two rooms behind those doors stood the cage of the tiger, with its open front, and in which waited the lady. Through these thick doors, heavily curtained with skins on the inside, it was impossible that any noise or suggestion should come from within to the person who should approach to raise the latch of one of them. But gold, and the power of a woman's will had brought the secret to the princess.

Not only did she know in which room stood the lady, ready to emerge, all blushing and radiant, should

her door be opened, but she knew who the lady was. It was one of the fairest and loveliest of the damsels of the court who had been selected as the reward of the accused youth, should he be proved innocent of the crime of aspiring to one so far above him; and the princess hated her. Often had she seen, or imagined that she had seen, this fair creature throwing glances of admiration upon the person of her lover, and sometimes she thought these glances were perceived and even returned. Now and then she had seen them talking together. It was but for a moment or two, but much can be said in a brief space. It may have been on most unimportant topics, but how could she know that? The girl was lovely, but she had dared to raise her eyes to the loved one of the princess, and, with all the intensity of the savage blood transmitted to her through long lines of wholly²¹ barbaric ancestors, she hated the woman who blushed and trembled behind that silent door.

When her lover turned and looked at her, and his eye met hers as she sat there paler and whiter than any one in the vast ocean of anxious faces about her, he saw, by that power of quick perception which is given to those whose souls are one, that she knew behind which door crouched the tiger, and behind which stood the lady. He had expected her to know it. He understood her nature, and his soul was assured that she would never rest until she had made plain to herself this thing, hidden to all other lookers-on, even to the king.²² The only hope for the youth in which there was any element of certainty was based upon the success of the princess in discovering this mystery, and the moment he looked upon her, he saw she had succeeded.

Then it was that his quick and anxious glance asked the question, "Which?" It was as plain to her as if he shouted it from where he stood. There was not an instant to be lost. The question was asked in a flash; it must be answered in another.

Her right arm lay on the cushioned parapet²³ before her. She raised her hand, and made a slight, quick movement toward the right. No one but her lover saw her. Every eye but his was fixed on the man in the arena.

He turned, and with a firm and rapid step he walked across the empty space. Every heart stopped beating, every breath was held, every eye was fixed immovably upon that man. Without the slightest hesitation, he went to the door on the right, and opened it.

Now, the point of the story is this: Did the tiger come out of that door, or did the lady?

The more we reflect upon this question, the harder it is to answer. It involves a study of the human heart which leads us through devious²⁴ mazes²⁵ of passion, out of which it is difficult to find our way. Think of it, fair reader, not as if the decision of the question depended upon yourself, but upon that hot-blooded, semi-barbaric princess, her soul at a white heat beneath the combined fires of despair and jealousy. She had lost him, but who should have him?

How often, in her waking hours and in her dreams, had she started in wild horror and covered her face with her hands as she thought of her lover opening the door on the other side of which waited the cruel fangs of the tiger!

But how much oftener had she seen him at the other door! How in her grievous reveries²⁶ had she gnashed

her teeth and torn her hair when she saw his start of rapturous delight as he opened the door of the lady! How her soul had burned in agony when she had seen him rush to meet that woman, with her flushing cheek and sparkling eye of triumph; when she had seen him lead her forth, his whole frame kindled with the joy of recovered life; when she had heard the glad shouts from the multitude, and the wild ringing of the happy bells; when she had seen the priest,²⁷ with his joyous followers, advance to the couple, and make them man and wife before her very eyes; and when she had seen them walk away together upon their path of flowers, followed by the tremendous shouts of the hilarious multitude, in which her one despairing shriek was lost and drowned!

Would it not be better for him to die at once, and go to wait for her in the blessed regions of semi-barbaric futurity?

And yet, that awful tiger, those shrieks, that blood!

Her decision had been indicated in an instant, but it had been made after days and nights of anguished deliberation. She had known she would be asked, she had decided what she would answer, and, without the slightest hesitation, she had moved her hand to the right.

The question of her decision is one not to be lightly considered, and it is not for me to presume to set up myself as the one person able to answer it. So I leave it with all of you: Which came out of the opened door—the lady or the tiger?

NOTES

1. **semi-barbaric.** Half-civilized, *semi* means half.
2. **Latin.** Related to the Romans.

3. **exuberant.** Abundant.
4. **communing.** See note 37, p. 313.
5. **orbs, orbits.** Those who moved about him as planets move about the sun in paths from which they never deviate.
6. **arena.** The sanded area in an amphitheatre upon which contests take place.
7. **rhapsodies.** Poetic utterances made in a state of excitement similar to the recitations of professional bards in ancient times.
8. **gladiators.** Professional fighters who took part in public contests with weapons. The allusion is to the supposed speech of Spartacus.
9. **amphitheatre.** See note 52, p. 275.
10. **incorruptible.** But the princess achieved the impossible.
11. **barleycorn.** A third of an inch. Hence a more accurate measure than is used in the proverb. "Every inch a king." The measure is derived from a grain of barley.
12. **hired mourners.** To insure a satisfactory ceremony even for total strangers in the kingdom.
13. **epithalamic.** A dance measure pertaining to marriage.
14. **tribunal.** A court.
15. **determinate.** Without possibility of appeal.
16. **hilarious.** Marked by noisy mirth.
17. **apple of his eye.** Common saying for object of extreme affection. Deuteronomy XXXII—3.
18. **conventional heroes.** Reference to the situation in which the lowly but worthy lover wins the bride of high degree.
19. **æsthetic.** From the standpoint of high art.
20. **moiety.** One of two equal parts.
21. **wholly.** There must also have been ancestors not barbaric at all, but their influence was not in evidence in her jealousy.
22. **even to the king.** It would have spoiled his æsthetic pleasure if he had not been completely surprised.
23. **parapet.** Railing.

24. **devious.** Winding.
25. **mazes.** Perplexity such as is caused when one is lost in a network of paths.
26. **reveries.** Day-dreams.
27. **priest.** The man who performs religious rites.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS

Rewrite the following sentences with the italicised word or words which make a correct statement.

Do Not Mark the Book

1. This story,—The Lady or The Tiger?—is *tragic*; *amusing*; *unsatisfactory*; *incomplete*.
2. The king was *humane*; *open to reason*; *stubborn*; *self-satisfied*.
3. His plan of reward and punishment was *unjust*; *ridiculous*; *unheard of*; *perfectly fair*.
4. The people of whom the story tells were *pagans*, *Christians*, *Hebrews*, *savages*.
5. The contests in the amphitheatre *brutalized*; *educated*; *entertained*; *civilized* them.
6. The princess attended the trial in the arena because *she wanted to see her lover again*; *she was uncivilized*; *she wanted to tell her lover which door to open*; *her father forced her to come*.
7. The young man opened the right hand door *unhesitatingly* because *he trusted the princess*; *did not care what became of him*; *wanted the princess to admire his courage*; *was too proud to hesitate*.
8. The princess knew the right hand door would *admit the tiger*; *the lady*; *nothing*; *was locked*.

MARY RAYMOND SHIPMAN ANDREWS

MRS. ANDREWS is the daughter of a clergyman and the wife of a judge. She is one of the foremost women who have contributed so largely to modern literature in America.

Mrs. Andrews's brother was for a time chaplain at the West Point Military Academy. Her son is a captain in the army. Patriotism in one form or another has inspired several of her stories and poems, including her greatest success, *The Perfect Tribute*.

The Perfect Tribute was first printed in Scribner's Magazine for July, 1906. No more sympathetic pen portrait of President Lincoln has ever been drawn. Truth and fiction are naturally combined in a straightforward narrative. Lincoln's lofty character and kind heart; his simplicity and nobility; his humor and modesty; and withal the loneliness which was his lot even in the White House are shown with such effect that the story achieved remarkable popularity in a short time.

THE PERFECT TRIBUTE

ON the morning of November 18, 1863, a special train drew out from Washington, carrying a distinguished company. The presence with them of the Marine Band¹ from the Navy Yard² spoke a public occasion to come, and among the travellers there were those who might be gathered only for an occasion of importance. There were judges of the Supreme Court of the United States; there were heads of departments; the general-in-chief³ of the army and his staff;⁴ members of the cabinet.⁵ In their midst, as they stood about the car before settling for the journey, towered⁶ a man sad, preoccupied, unassuming; a man awkward and ill-dressed; a man, as he leaned slouchingly against the wall, of no grace of look or manner, in whose haggard face seemed to be the suffering of the sins of the world. Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, journeyed with his party to assist at the consecration, the next day, of the national cemetery at Gettysburg.⁷ The quiet November landscape slipped past the rattling train, and the President's deep-set eyes stared out at it gravely, a bit listlessly. From time to time he talked with those who were about him; from time to time there were flashes of that quaint wit which is linked, as his greatness, with his name, but his mind was to-day dispirited, unhopeful. The weight on his shoulders seemed pressing more heavily than he had courage to

press back against it, the responsibility of one almost a dictator⁸ in a wide, war-torn country came near to crushing, at times, the mere human soul and body. There was, moreover, a speech to be made to-morrow to thousands who would expect their President to say something to them worth the listening of a people who were making history; something brilliant, eloquent, strong. The melancholy gaze glittered with a grim smile. He—Abraham Lincoln—the lad bred in a cabin,⁹ tutored in rough schools here and there, fighting for, snatching at crumbs¹⁰ of learning that fell from rich tables, struggling to a hard knowledge which well knew its own limitations—it was he of whom this was expected. He glanced across the car. Edward Everett¹¹ sat there, the orator of the following day, the finished gentleman, the careful student, the heir of traditions of learning and breeding, of scholarly instincts and resources. The self-made President gazed at him wistfully. From him the people might expect and would get a balanced and polished oration. For that end he had been born, and inheritance and opportunity and inclination had worked together for that end's perfection. While Lincoln had wrested from a scanty schooling a command of English clear and forcible always, but, he feared, rough-hewn, lacking, he feared, in finish and in breadth—of what use was it for such a one to try to fashion a speech fit to take a place by the side of Everett's silver sentences? He sighed. Yet the people had a right to the best he could give, and he would give them his best; at least he could see to it that the words were real and were short; at least he would not, so, exhaust their patience. And the work might as well be done now in the leisure of the journey. He

put a hand, big, powerful, labor-knotted,¹² into first one sagging pocket and then another, in search of a pencil, and drew out one broken across the end. He glanced about inquiringly—there was nothing to write upon. Across the car the Secretary of State¹³ had just opened a package of books and their wrapping of brown paper lay on the floor, torn carelessly in a zig-zag. The President stretched a long arm.

“Mr. Seward, may I have this to do a little writing?” he asked, and the Secretary protested, insisting on finding better material.

But Lincoln, with a few words, had his way, and soon the untidy stump of a pencil was at work and the great head, the deep-lined face, bent over Seward’s bit of brown paper, the whole man absorbed in his task.

Earnestly, with that “capacity for taking infinite pains” which has been defined as genius,¹⁴ he labored as the hours flew, building together close-fitted word on word, sentence on sentence. As the sculptor must dream the statue prisoned in the marble, as the artist must dream the picture to come from the brilliant unmeaning of his palette,¹⁵ as the musician dreams a song, so he who writes must have a vision of his finished work before he touches, to begin it, a medium more elastic, more vivid, more powerful than any other—words—prismatic¹⁶ bits of humanity, old as the Pharaohs,¹⁷ new as the Arabs¹⁸ of the street, broken, sparkling, alive, from the age-long life of the race. Abraham Lincoln, with the clear thought in his mind of what he would say, found the sentences that came to him colorless, wooden. A wonder flashed over him once or twice of Everett’s skill with these symbols which, it seemed to him, were to the Bostonian¹⁹ a

key-board²⁰ facile to make music, to Lincoln tools to do his labor. He put the idea aside, for it hindered him. As he found the sword fitted to his hand he must fight with it; it might be that he, as well as Everett, could say that which should go straight from him to his people, to the nation who struggled at his back towards a goal. At least each syllable he said should be chiselled from the rock of his sincerity. So he cut here and there an adjective, here and there a phrase, baring the heart of his thought, leaving no ribbon or flower of rhetoric²¹ to flutter in the eyes of those with whom he would be utterly honest. And when he had done he read the speech and dropped it from his hand to the floor and stared again from the window. It was the best he could do, and it was a failure. So, with the pang of the workman who believes his work done wrong, he lifted and folded the torn bit of paper and put it in his pocket, and put aside the thought of it, as of a bad thing which he might not better, and turned and talked cheerfully with his friends.

At eleven o'clock on the morning of the day following, on November 19, 1863, a vast, silent multitude billowed, like waves of the sea, over what had been not long before the battle-field of Gettysburg. There were wounded soldiers²² there who had beaten their way four months before through a singing fire across these quiet fields, who had seen the men die who were buried here; there were troops, grave and responsible, who must soon go again into battle; there were the rank and file of an everyday American gathering in surging thousands; and above them all, on the open-air platform, there were the leaders of the land, the pilots who to-day lifted a hand from the wheel of the

ship of state to salute the memory of those gone down in the storm. Most of the men in that group of honor are now passed over to the majority, but their names are not dead in American history—great ghosts who walk still in the annals of their country, their flesh-and-blood faces were turned attentively that bright, still November afternoon towards the orator of the day, whose voice held the audience.

For two hours Everett spoke and the throng listened untired, fascinated by the dignity of his high-bred look and manner almost as much, perhaps, as by the speech which has taken a place in literature. As he had been expected to speak he spoke, of the great battle, of the causes of the war, of the results to come after. It was an oration which missed no shade of expression, no reach of grasp. Yet there were those in the multitude, sympathetic to a unit as it was with the Northern cause, who grew restless when this man who had been crowned with so thick a laurel wreath²³ by Americans spoke of Americans as rebels, of a cause for which honest Americans were giving their lives as a crime. The days were war days, and men's passions were inflamed, yet there were men who listened to Edward Everett who believed that his great speech would have been greater unenforced with bitterness.

As the clear, cultivated voice fell into silence, the mass of people burst into a long storm of applause, for they knew that they had heard an oration which was an event. They clapped and cheered him again and again and again, as good citizens acclaim a man worthy of honor whom they have delighted to honor. At last, as the ex-Governor of Massachusetts, the ex-ambassador to England, the ex-Secretary of State, the

ex-Senator of the United States—handsome, distinguished, graceful, sure of voice and of movement—took his seat, a tall, gaunt figure detached itself from the group on the platform and slouched slowly across the open space and stood facing the audience. A stir and a whisper brushed over the field of humanity, as if a breeze had rippled a monstrous bed of poppies. This was the President. A quivering silence settled down and every eye was wide to watch this strange, disappointing appearance, every ear alert to catch the first sound of his voice. Suddenly the voice came, in a queer, squeaking falsetto.²⁴ The effect on the audience was irrepressible, ghastly. After Everett's deep tones, after the strain of expectancy, this extraordinary, gaunt apparition, this high, thin sound from the huge body, were too much for the American crowd's sense of humor, always stronger than its sense of reverence. A suppressed yet unmistakable titter caught the throng, ran through it, and was gone. Yet no one who knew the President's face could doubt that he had heard it and had understood. Calmly enough, after a pause almost too slight to be recognized, he went on, and in a dozen words his tones had gathered volume, he had come to his power and dignity. There was no smile now on any face of those who listened. People stopped breathing rather, as if they feared to miss an inflection. A loose-hung figure, six feet four inches high, he towered above them, conscious of and quietly ignoring the bad first impression, unconscious of a charm of personality which reversed that impression within a sentence. That these were his people was his only thought. He had something to say to them; what did it matter about him or his voice?

"Fourscore and seven years ago," spoke the Presi-

dent, "our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation, so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of it as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

"But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow, this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or to detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth."

There was no sound from the silent, vast assembly. The President's large figure stood before them, at first inspired, glorified with the thrill and swing of his words, lapsing slowly in the stillness into lax, ungraceful lines. He stared at them a moment with sad eyes full of gentleness, of resignation, and in the

deep quiet they stared at him. Not a hand was lifted in applause. Slowly the big, awkward man slouched back across the platform and sank into his seat, and yet there was no sound of approval, of recognition from the audience; only a long sigh ran like a ripple on an ocean through rank after rank. In Lincoln's heart a throb of pain answered it. His speech had been, as he feared it would be, a failure. As he gazed steadily at these his countrymen who would not give him even a little perfunctory applause for his best effort, he knew that the disappointment of it cut into his soul. And then he was aware that there was music, the choir was singing a dirge; his part was done, and his part had failed.

When the ceremonies were over Everett at once found the President. "Mr. President," he began, "your speech—" but Lincoln had interrupted, flashing a kindly smile down at him, laying a hand on his shoulder.

"We'll manage not to talk about my speech, Mr. Everett," he said. "This isn't the first time I've felt that my dignity ought not to permit me to be a public speaker."

He went on in a few cordial sentences to pay tribute to the orator of the occasion. Everett listened thoughtfully and when the chief had done, "Mr. President," he said simply, "I should be glad²⁵ if I could flatter myself that I came as near the central idea of the occasion in two hours as you did in two minutes."

But Lincoln shook his head and laughed and turned to speak to a newcomer with no change of opinion—he was apt to trust his own judgments.

The special train which left Gettysburg immediately

after the solemnities on the battle-field cemetery brought the President's party into Washington during the night. There was no rest for the man at the wheel of the nation next day, but rather added work until, at about four in the afternoon, he felt sorely the need of air and went out from the White House²⁶ alone, for a walk. His mind still ran on the events of the day before—the impressive, quiet multitude, the serene sky of November arched, in the hushed interregnum²⁷ of the year, between the joy of summer and the war of winter, over those who had gone from earthly war to heavenly joy. The picture was deeply engraved in his memory; it haunted him. And with it came a soreness, a discomfort of mind which had haunted him as well in the hours between—the chagrin²⁸ of the failure of his speech. During the day he had gently but decisively put aside all reference to it from those about him; he had glanced at the headlines in the newspapers with a sarcastic smile; the Chief Executive must be flattered, of course; newspaper notices meant nothing. He knew well that he had made many successful speeches; no man of his shrewdness could be ignorant that again and again he had carried an audience by storm; yet he had no high idea of his own speech-making, and yesterday's affair had shaken his confidence more. He remembered sadly that, even for the President, no hand, no voice had been lifted in applause.

"It must have been pretty poor stuff," he said half aloud; "yet I thought it was a fair little composition. I meant to do well by them."

His long strides had carried him into the outskirts of the city, and suddenly, at a corner, from behind a hedge, a young boy of fifteen years or so came rush-

ing toward him and tripped and stumbled against him, and Lincoln kept him from falling with a quick, vigorous arm. The lad righted himself and tossed back his thick, light hair and stared haughtily, and the President, regarding him, saw that his blue eyes were blind with tears.

"Do you want all of the public highway? Can't a gentleman from the South even walk in the streets without—without—" and the broken sentence ended in a sob.

The anger and the insolence of the lad were nothing to the man who towered above him—to that broad mind this was but a child in trouble. "My boy, the fellow that's interfering with your walking is down inside of you," he said gently, and with that the astonished youngster opened his wet eyes wide and laughed—a choking, childish laugh that pulled at the older man's heart-strings. "That's better, sonny," he said, and patted the slim shoulder. "Now tell me what's wrong with the world. Maybe I might help straighten it."

"Wrong, wrong!" the child raved; "everything's wrong," and launched into a mad tirade against the government from the President down.

Lincoln listened patiently, and when the lad paused for breath, "Go ahead," he said good-naturedly. "Every little helps."²⁹

With that the youngster was silent and drew himself up with stiff dignity, offended yet fascinated; unable to tear himself away from this strange giant who was so insultingly kind under his abuse, who yet inspired him with such a sense of trust and of hope.

"I want a lawyer," he said impulsively, looking up anxiously into the deep-lined face inches above him.

"I don't know where to find a lawyer in this horrible city, and I must have one—I can't wait—it may be too late—I want a lawyer *now*," and once more he was in a fever of excitement.

"What do you want with a lawyer?" Again the calm, friendly tone quieted him.

"I want him to draw a will.³⁰ My brother is—" he caught his breath with a gasp in a desperate effort for self-control. "They say he's—dying." He finished the sentence with a quiver in his voice, and the brave front and the trembling, childish tone went to the man's heart. "I don't believe it—he can't be dying," the boy talked on, gathering courage. "But anyway, he wants to make a will, and—and I reckon—it may be that he—he must."

"I see," the other answered gravely, and the young, torn soul felt an unreasoning confidence that he had found a friend. "Where is your brother?"

"He's in the prison hospital there—in that big building," he pointed down the street. "He's captain in our army—in the Confederate army. He was wounded at Gettysburg."

"Oh!" The deep-set eyes gazed down at the fresh face, its muscles straining under grief and responsibility, with the gentlest, most fatherly pity. "I think I can manage your job, my boy," he said. "I used to practise law in a small way myself, and I'll be glad to draw the will for you."

The young fellow had whirled him around before he had finished the sentence. "Come," he said. "Don't waste time talking—why didn't you tell me before?" and then he glanced up. He saw the ill-fitting clothes, the crag-like, rough-modelled head, the awkward carriage of the man; he was too young to know that

what he felt beyond these was greatness. There was a tone of patronage³¹ in his voice and in the cock of his aristocratic³² young head as he spoke. "We can pay you, you know—we're not paupers." He fixed his eyes on Lincoln's face to watch the impression as he added, "My brother is Carter Hampton Blair, of Georgia. I'm Warrington Blair. The Hampton Court³³ Blairs, you know."

"Oh!" said the President.

The lad went on:

"It would have been all right if Nellie hadn't left Washington to-day—my sister, Miss Eleanor Hampton Blair. Carter was better this morning, and so she went with the Senator. She's secretary to Senator Warrington, you know. He's on the Yankee³⁴ side"—the tone was full of contempt—"but yet he's our cousin, and when he offered Nellie the position she would take it in spite of Carter and me. We were so poor"—the lad's pride was off its guard for the moment, melted in the soothing trust with which this stranger thrilled his soul. It was a relief to him to talk, and the large hand which rested on his shoulder as they walked seemed an assurance that his words were accorded respect and understanding. "Of course, if Nellie had been here she would have known how to get a lawyer, but Carter had a bad turn half an hour ago, and the doctor said he might get better or he might die any minute, and Carter remembered about the money, and got so excited that they said it was hurting him, so I said I'd get a lawyer, and I rushed out, and the first thing I ran against you. I'm afraid I wasn't very polite." The smile on the gaunt face above him was all the answer he needed. "I'm sorry. I apologize. It certainly was good of

you to come right back with me." The child's manner was full of the assured graciousness of a high-born gentleman; there was a lovable quality in his very patronage, and the suffering and the sweetness and the pride combined held Lincoln by his sense of humor as well as by his soft heart. "You sha'n't lose anything by it," the youngster went on. "We may be poor, but we have more than plenty to pay you, I'm sure. Nellie has some jewels, you see—oh, I think several things yet. Is it very expensive to draw a will?" he asked wistfully.

"No, sonny; it's one of the cheapest³⁵ things a man can do," was the hurried answer, and the child's tone showed a lighter heart.

"I'm glad of that, for, of course, Carter wants to leave—to leave as much as he can. You see, that's what the will is about—Carter is engaged to marry Miss Sally Maxfield, and they would have been married now if he hadn't been wounded and taken prisoner. So, of course, like any gentleman that's engaged, he wants to give her everything that he has. Hampton Court has to come³⁶ to me after Carter, but there's some money—quite a lot—only we can't get it now. And that ought to go to Carter's wife, which is what she is—just about—and if he doesn't make a will it won't. It will come to Nellie and me if—if anything should happen³⁷ to Carter."

"So you're worrying for fear you'll inherit some money?" Lincoln asked meditatively.

"Of course," the boy threw back impatiently. "Of course, it would be a shame if it came to Nellie and me, for we couldn't ever make her take it. We don't need it—I can look after Nellie and myself," he said proudly, with a quick, tossing motion of his

fair head that was like the motion of a spirited, thoroughbred horse. They had arrived at the prison. "I can get you through all right. They all know me here," he spoke over his shoulder reassuringly to the President with a friendly glance. Dashing down the corridors in front, he did not see the guards³⁸ salute the tall figure which followed him; too preoccupied to wonder at the ease of their entrance, he flew along through the big building, and behind him in large strides came his friend.

A young man—almost a boy, too—of twenty-three or twenty-four, his handsome face a white shadow, lay propped against the pillows, watching the door eagerly as they entered.

"Good boy, Warry," he greeted the little fellow; "you've got me a lawyer," and the pale features lighted with a smile of such radiance as seemed incongruous in this gruesome³⁹ place. He held out his hand to the man who swung toward him, looming mountainous behind his brother's slight figure. "Thank you for coming," he said cordially, and in his tone was the same air of a *grand seigneur*⁴⁰ as in the lad's. Suddenly a spasm of pain caught him, his head fell into the pillows, his muscles twisted, his arm about the neck of the kneeling boy tightened convulsively. Yet while the agony still held him he was smiling again with gay courage. "It nearly blew me away," he whispered, his voice shaking, but his eyes bright with amusement. "We'd better get to work before one of those little breezes carries me too far. There's pen and ink on the table, Mr.—my brother did not tell me your name."

"Your brother and I met informally," the other answered, setting the materials in order for writing.

"He charged into me like a young steer,"⁴¹ and the boy, out of his deep trouble, laughed delightedly. "My name is Lincoln."

The young officer regarded him.

"That's a good name from your standpoint—you are, I take it, a Northerner?"

The deep eyes smiled whimsically.

"I'm on that side of the fence. You may call me a Yankee if you'd like."

"There's something about you, Mr. Lincoln," the young Georgian answered gravely, with a kindly and unconscious condescension, "which makes me wish to call you, if I may, a friend."

He had that happy instinct which shapes a sentence to fall on its smoothest surface, and the President, in whom the same instinct was strong, felt a quick comradeship with this enemy who, about to die, saluted him. He put out his great fist swiftly.

"Shake hands," he said. "Friends it is."

"'Till death us do part,'"⁴² said the officer slowly, and smiled, and then threw back his head with a gesture like the boy's. "We must do the will," he said peremptorily.⁴³

"Yes, now we'll fix this will business, Captain Blair," the big man answered cheerfully. "When your mind's relieved about your plunder you can rest easier and get well faster."

The sweet, brilliant smile of the Southerner shone out, his arm drew the boy's shoulder closer, and the President, with a pang, knew that his friend knew that he must die.

With direct, condensed question and clear answer the simple will was shortly drawn and the impromptu⁴⁴

lawyer rose to take his leave. But the wounded man put out his hand.

"Don't go yet," he pleaded, with the imperious, winning accent which was characteristic of both brothers. The sudden, radiant smile broke again over the face, young, drawn with suffering, prophetic of close death. "I like you," he brought out frankly. "I've never liked a stranger as much in such short order before."

His head, fair as the boy's, lay back on the pillows, locks of hair damp against the whiteness, the blue eyes shone like jewels from the colorless face, a weak arm stretched protectingly about the young brother who pressed against him. There was so much courage, so much helplessness, so much pathos in the picture that the President's great heart throbbed with a desire to comfort them.

"I want to talk to you about that man Lincoln, your namesake," the prisoner's deep, uncertain voice went on, trying pathetically to make conversation which might interest, might hold his guest. The man who stood hesitating controlled a startled movement. "I'm Southern to the core of me, and I believe with my soul in the cause I've fought for, the cause I'm—" he stopped, and his hand caressed the boy's shoulder. "But that President of yours is a remarkable man. He's regarded as a red devil by most of us down home, you know," and he laughed, "but I've admired him all along. He's inspired by principle, not by animosity,⁴⁵ in this fight; he's real and he's powerful and"—he lifted his head impetuously and his eyes flashed—"and, by Jove,⁴⁶ have you read his speech of yesterday in the papers?"

Lincoln gave him an odd look. "No," he said, "I haven't."

"Sit down," Blair commanded. "Don't grudge a few minutes to a man in hard luck. I want to tell you about that speech. You're not so busy but that you ought to know."

"Well, yes," said Lincoln, "perhaps I ought." He took out his watch and made a quick mental calculation. "It's only a question of going without my dinner, and the boy is dying," he thought. "If I can give him a little pleasure the dinner is a small matter." He spoke again. "It's the soldiers who are the busy men,⁴⁷ not the lawyers, nowadays," he said. "I'll be delighted to spend a half hour with you, Captain Blair, if I won't tire you."

"That's good of you," the young officer said, and a king on his throne could not have been gracious in a more lordly yet unconscious way. "By the way, this great man isn't any relation of yours, is he, Mr. Lincoln?"

"He's a kind of connection—through my grandfather," Lincoln acknowledged. "But I know just the sort of fellow he is—you can say what you want."

"What I want to say first is this: that he yesterday made one of the great speeches of history."

"What?" demanded Lincoln, staring.

"I know what I'm talking about." The young fellow brought his thin fist down on the bedclothes. "My father was a speaker—all my uncles and my grandfather were speakers. I've been brought up on oratory.⁴⁸ I've studied and read the best models since I was a lad in knee-breeches. And I know a great speech when I see it. And when Nellie—my sister—brought in the paper this morning and read that to me

I told her at once that not six times since history began has a speech been made which was its equal.⁴⁹ That was before she told me what the Senator said."

"What did the Senator say?" asked the quiet man who listened.

"It was Senator Warrington, to whom my sister is—is acting as secretary." The explanation was distasteful, but he went on, carried past the jog by the interest of his story. "He was at Gettysburg yesterday, with the President's party. He told my sister that the speech so went home to the hearts of all those thousands of people that when it was ended it was as if the whole audience held its breath—there was not a hand lifted to applaud. One might as well applaud the Lord's Prayer—it would have been sacrilege.⁵⁰ And they all felt it—down to the lowest. There was a long minute of reverent silence, no sound from all that great throng—it seems to me, an enemy, that it was the most perfect tribute that has ever been paid by any people to any orator."

The boy, lifting his hand from his brother's shoulder to mark the effect of his brother's words, saw with surprise that in the strange lawyer's eyes were tears. But the wounded man did not notice.

"It will live, that speech. Fifty years from now American schoolboys will be learning it as part of their education. It is not merely my opinion," he went on. "Warrington says the whole country is ringing with it. And you haven't read it? And your name's Lincoln? Worry, boy, where's the paper Nellie left? I'll read the speech to Mr. Lincoln myself."

The boy had sprung to his feet and across the

room, and had lifted a folded newspaper from the table. "Let me read it, Carter—it might tire you."

The giant figure which had crouched, elbows on knees, in the shadows by the narrow hospital cot, heaved itself slowly upward till it loomed at its full height in air. Lincoln turned his face toward the boy standing under the flickering gas-jet and reading with soft, sliding inflections⁵¹ the words which had for twenty-four hours been gall and wormwood to his memory. And as the sentences slipped from the lad's mouth, behold, a miracle happened, for the man who had written them knew that they were great. He knew then, as many a lesser one has known, that out of a little loving-kindness had come great joy; that he had wrested with gentleness a blessing from his enemy.

"'Fourscore and seven years ago,'" the fresh voice began, and the face of the dying man stood out white in the white pillows, sharp with eagerness, and the face of the President shone as he listened as if to new words. The field of yesterday, the speech, the deep silence which followed it, all were illuminated, as his mind went back, with new meaning. With the realization that the stillness had meant, not indifference, but perhaps, as this generous enemy had said, "The most perfect tribute ever paid by any people to any orator," there came to him a rush of glad strength to bear the burdens of the nation. The boy's tones ended clearly, deliberately:

"'We here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.'"

There was deep stillness in the hospital ward as there had been stillness on the field of Gettysburg. The soldier's voice broke it. "It's a wonderful speech," he said. "There's nothing finer. Other men have spoken stirring words, for the North and for the South, but never before, I think, with the love of both breathing through them. It is only the greatest who can be a partisan without bitterness, and only such to-day may call himself not Northern or Southern, but American. To feel that your enemy can fight you to death without malice,⁵² with charity—it lifts country, it lifts humanity to something worth dying for. They are beautiful, broad words and the sting of war would be drawn if the soul of Lincoln could be breathed into the armies. Do you agree with me?" he demanded abruptly, and Lincoln answered slowly, from a happy heart.

"I believe it is a good speech," he said.

The impetuous Southerner went on: "Of course, it's all wrong from my point of view," and the gentleness of his look made the words charming. "The thought which underlies it is warped, inverted, as I look at it, yet that doesn't alter my admiration of the man and of his words. I'd like to put my hand in his before I die," he said, and the sudden, brilliant, sweet smile lit the transparency of his face like a lamp; "and I'd like to tell him that I know that what we're all fighting for, the best of us, is the right of our country as it is given us to see it." He was laboring a bit with the words now as if he were tired, but he hushed the boy imperiously. "When a man gets so close to death's door that he feels the wind through it from a larger atmosphere, then the small things are blown away. The bitterness of the fight

has faded for me. I only feel the love of country, the satisfaction of giving my life for it. The speech—that speech—has made it look higher and simpler—your side as well as ours. I would like to put my hand in Abraham Lincoln’s——”

The clear, deep voice, with its hesitations, its catch of weakness, stopped short. Convulsively the hand shot out and caught at the great fingers that hung near him, pulling the President, with the strength of agony, to his knees by the cot. The prisoner was writhing in an attack of mortal pain, while he held, unknowing that he held it, the hand of his new friend in a torturing grip. The door of death had opened wide and a stormy wind was carrying the bright, conquered spirit into that larger atmosphere of which he had spoken. Suddenly the struggle ceased, the unconscious head rested in the boy’s arms, and the hand of the Southern soldier lay quiet, where he had wished to place it, in the hand of Abraham Lincoln.

NOTES

1. **Marine Band.** The best military band in America. John Philip Sousa, “the March King” was at one time, the bandmaster.
2. **Navy Yard.** War vessels are fitted out and repaired here.
3. **general-in-chief.** Not the same as commander-in-chief.
4. **staff.** A body of assistant officers.
5. **cabinet.** The heads of executive departments who act as the President’s immediate advisers.
6. **towered.** Abraham Lincoln stood six feet four inches tall.
7. **Gettysburg.** A village in Pennsylvania near Harrisburg, the capital. Here on the first days

of July, 1863, was fought the decisive battle of the Civil War and one of the most important battles in the history of the world. The Confederate army under General Robert E. Lee had invaded the North. The Union forces under General Meade repulsed the brilliant attacks of the Confederates, and General Lee was forced to return to the South.

8. **dictator.** A ruler vested with absolute authority. When martial law is declared the guarantees of civil liberty are, for the time, suspended.
9. The log cabin in which Abraham Lincoln was born is now preserved in a marble memorial. Like the vast estates in Mount Vernon and Montecello this rude log hut is one of our national shrines.
10. **crumbs.** The allusion is to the parable of Lazarus, Luke XVI.
11. **Edward Everett.** A celebrated American statesman and eloquent orator. At the time of this story he was sixty-seven years old and had been in turn a member of Congress, governor of Massachusetts, minister to England, president of Harvard College, and United States Senator. He died in 1865.
12. **labor-knotted.** As a young man Lincoln had been a rail-splitter and a deck-hand on a flat-boat.
13. **Secretary of State.** William Henry Seward, an eminent American statesman. He was Lincoln's Secretary of State and during the stormy period of the Civil War he proved a prudent pilot of our foreign relations. He was wounded at the time of Lincoln's assassination.
14. **genius.** Thomas Carlyle the British historian was the author of this definition of genius.
15. **palette.** A thin board with a thumb hole, on which a painter mixes his colors.
16. **prismatic.** Having the hues of the rainbow.

17. **Pharaohs.** The kings of ancient Egypt.
18. **Arabs.** Streets Arabs are vagabond children who make the streets their home.
19. **Bostonian.** Edward Everett was a resident of Boston.
20. **keyboard.** As of a piano or organ.
21. **rhetoric.** The art of elegant prose composition.
22. **wounded soldiers.** 13,709 Union soldiers were wounded at the Battle of Gettysburg.
23. **laurel wreath.** See note 45, p. 313.
24. **falsetto.** A high pitched male voice.
25. **I should be glad, etc.** These are Everett's actual words.
26. **White House.** The official residence of the President of the United States.
27. **interregnum.** A period of time when activities are suspended, as, the time between the death of one sovereign and the coronation of his successor.
28. **chagrin.** Vexation.
29. **Every little helps.** Talking would relieve his trouble. The use of such proverbs was characteristic of Lincoln.
30. **will.** A written document in which a person declares how he would have his property disposed of after his death.
31. **patronage.** Condescension toward an inferior.
32. **aristocratic.** Haughty, proud, as belonging to a superior class.
33. **Hampton Court.** The name of the estate is taken from the famous palace on the Thames River near London which was built by Cardinal Wolsey.
34. **Yankee.** The nickname by which Southerners spoke of a person from the North.
35. **cheapest.** There is a touch of Lincoln's whimsical humor here. A lawyer's charge for drawing a will is not great, but it costs the dying person still less to give away his earthly possessions.

36. **has to come.** By the terms of some ancestor's will, to keep the estate in the Blair family.
37. **anything should happen.** The familiar expression for death.
38. **guards.** The sentinels on guard at the prison hospital recognized the President.
39. **gruesome.** Frightful.
40. **grand seigneur.** Great lord.
41. **steer.** An ox.
42. **"Till death do us part."** A quotation from the marriage ceremony.
43. **peremptorily.** Positively.
44. **impromptu.** Offhand.
45. **animosity.** Enmity.
46. **Jove.** King of the Gods.
47. **Busy men.** The humor such as is shown in this remark, where one conversationalist means one thing and the other another is called Shakespearean irony from the fact that Shakespeare uses it frequently in his plays.
48. **oratory.** The South has always prided itself upon the eloquence of its public speakers, from Patrick Henry to the present day.
49. **its equal.** The Gettysburg Address is universally recognized as a classic oration.
50. **sacrilege.** An act of impiety.
51. **inflections.** Changes in the tone or pitch of the voice. A somewhat drawling speech in which the vowels are pronounced broadly and the consonants are not pronounced with the utmost distinctness is characteristic of the South.
52. **malice.** Hatred. "With malice toward none; with charity toward all" is a memorable phrase from Lincoln's Second Inaugural Speech.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND PROJECTS

I.

1. How long had the Civil War lasted at the date of this story?
2. Why is the battle of Gettysburg regarded as the turning point of the Civil War?
3. How soon after the battle did the events narrated in this story take place?
4. What was Lincoln's opinion of his own ability as a speaker?
5. What tributes are contained in the Gettysburg Address?
6. How was Edward Everett qualified to judge a speech?
7. How was Captain Blair fitted to judge a speech?
8. What ability had the audience at Gettysburg to recognize a good speech?
9. What tribute did each of the above-mentioned judges pay to Lincoln's speech?
10. Which was The Perfect Tribute.

II.

Rewrite the following sentences, using the word or words in italics that make a correct statement.

Do Not Mark the Book

1. The Perfect Tribute is *a true story; founded on fact; adapted from another author; true to life.*
2. It is a *humorous; tragic; sentimental; mystery* story.
3. Lincoln went to Gettysburg to *lay a corner-stone;*

dedicate a cemetery; review a parade; deliver an oration; view the battlefield.

4. Lincoln was a *modest; conceited; aristocratic; self-made* man.
5. Lincoln went to the prison hospital because of his *sympathy; sense of duty; politeness; curiosity.*

III.

Complete these statements.

Do Not Mark the Book

1. There is — — — — — in the story.
2. The people who heard Lincoln's speech at Gettysburg came from —————.
3. Edward Everett was — — —————.
4. Abraham Lincoln ——— the Confederates.
5. Lincoln's behavior toward Carter Blair was ———
—————.

IV

1. Prepare a topical outline of the story.
2. Learn the Gettysburg Address by heart.
3. Trace on a map the railroad route from Washington to Gettysburg.
4. Draw up an imaginary program of the exercises at Gettysburg.
5. Collect views of the battlefield and cemetery at Gettysburg.

EDWARD EVERETT HALE

EDWARD EVERETT HALE, a clergyman and writer was born, April 3, 1822 and died June 10, 1909. He was a descendant of Nathan Hale, the martyr of the Revolution, and he was the nephew and namesake of Edward Everett, the eloquent orator, who spoke at Gettysburg the day Lincoln made his great address. His father owned the Boston *Daily Advertiser*. All his brothers and sisters achieved more than ordinary success.

Hale was a precocious boy and graduated from Harvard at the age of seventeen. After some experience on his father's paper, he became a clergyman. Most of his life he was pastor of the South Congregational Church in Boston. Besides his sermons, he wrote many short stories and novels.

Throughout his life Dr. Hale was a reformer, became a strong abolitionist and during the civil war he preached and wrote for the Union cause and against slavery. He founded the King's Daughters, a philanthropic society, and the Lend a Hand Clubs whose motto is "Look up and not down; look forward and not back; look out and not in; and lend a hand." He helped establish the Hague Peace Tribunal. He was one of the first persons in the United States to take an interest in children's gardens. It is said that once when he received from the government at Washington a package of pamphlets about farming in the West,

he sat down and wrote a letter to the Department of Agriculture asking, "What are you doing for the children of Geneva Street?" In a few days he received a bag of seeds which he distributed to the children of the tenement houses for their window boxes.

During the last six years of his life Dr. Hale served as chaplain of the Senate of the United States.

Edward Everett Hale may be said to be the last of that famous group of New England writers which included Emerson, Longfellow, Lowell, Whittier, and Holmes.

THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY was published in 1863 in the December number of *The Atlantic Monthly*. It became popular at once because the triumph of the Union armies that summer at Gettysburg and Vicksburg had prepared the people for its message. It helped lift public sentiment to a higher level of patriotism. Within a year more than half a million copies were sold in America and Europe.

In this story Dr. Hale shows what it really means to be without a country. The idea occurred to Dr. Hale that Napoleon might have been transferred from one British ship to another instead of being sent, an exile to St. Helena. Thus he had the germ of his story. The title in itself is striking. Dr. Hale read widely to gather material. To make the story as real and vivid as possible, the author begins by quoting the death notice of Philip Nolan which he pretends he has read in the newspaper.

The lesson of loyalty and respect to the flag is as much needed now as it was in the days when this story was written.

THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY

I¹ SUPPOSE that very few casual readers² of the *New York Herald*³ of August 13, 1863, observed, in an obscure corner, among the "Deaths," the announcement:—

"NOLAN. *Died*, on board U. S. Corvette⁴ *Levant*,⁵ Lat. 2° 11' S. Long. 131° W.,⁶ on the 11th of May, PHILIP NOLAN."⁷

I happened to observe it because I was stranded at the old Mission⁸ House in Mackinac,⁹ waiting for a Lake Superior¹⁰ steamer which did not choose to come, and I was devouring to the very stubble¹¹ all the current literature I could get hold of, even down to the deaths and marriages in the *Herald*. My memory for names and people is good, and the reader will see, as he goes on, that I had reason enough to remember Philip Nolan. There are hundreds of readers who would have paused at that announcement if the officer of the *Levant* who reported it had chosen to make it thus: "Died, May 11, THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY." For it was as "The Man without a Country" that poor Philip Nolan had generally been known by the officers who had him in charge during some fifty years, as, indeed, by all the men who sailed under them. I dare say there is many a man who has taken wine with him once a fortnight,¹² in a three years' cruise,¹³ who never knew that his name was "Nolan," or whether the poor wretch had any name at all.

There can now be no possible harm in telling this poor creature's story. Reason enough there has been till now, ever since Madison's¹⁴ administration went out in 1817, for very strict secrecy, the secrecy of honor itself, among the gentlemen of the navy who have had Nolan in successive charge. And certainly it speaks well for the *esprit de corps*¹⁵ of the profession and the personal honor of its members that to the press this man's story has been wholly unknown,—and, I think, to the country at large also. I have reason to think, from some investigations I made in the Naval Archives¹⁶ when I was attached to the Bureau of Construction,¹⁷ that every official report relating to him was burned when Ross¹⁸ burned the public buildings at Washington. One of the Tuckers,¹⁹ or possibly one of the Watsons,¹⁹ had Nolan in charge at the end of the war; and when, on returning from his cruise, he reported at Washington to one of the Crowninshields,²⁰—who was in the Navy Department when he came home,—he found that the Department ignored the whole business. Whether they really knew nothing about it, or whether it was a "*Non mi ricordo*,"²¹ determined on as a piece of policy, I do not know. But this I do know, that since 1817, and possibly before, no naval officer has mentioned Nolan in his report of a cruise.

But, as I say, there is no need for secrecy any longer. And now the poor creature is dead, it seems to me worth while to tell a little of his story, by way of showing young Americans of to-day what it is to be A MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY.

PHILIP NOLAN was as fine a young officer as there was in the "Legion of the West,"²² as the Western division of our army was then called. When Aaron

Burr²³ made his first dashing expedition down to New Orleans in 1805, at Fort Massac,²⁴ or somewhere above on the river, he met, as the Devil would have it, this gay, dashing, bright young fellow, at some dinner-party, I think. Burr marked him, talked to him, walked with him, took him a day or two's voyage in his flatboat,²⁵ and, in short, fascinated him. For the next year barrack²⁶ life was very tame to poor Nolan. He occasionally took advantage of the permission the great man had given him to write to him. Long, high-worded, stilted letters the poor boy wrote and rewrote and copied. But never a line did he have in reply from the gay deceiver. The other boys in the garrison²⁷ sneered at him because he sacrificed in this unrequited affection for a politician the time which they devoted to Monogahela,²⁸ sledge, and high-low-jack.²⁹ Bourbon,³⁰ euchre, and poker³¹ were still unknown. But one day Nolan had his revenge. This time Burr came down the river, not as an attorney seeking a place for his office, but as a disguised conqueror. He had defeated I know not how many district-attorneys;³² he had dined at I know not how many public dinners; he had been heralded in I know not how many Weekly Arguses,³³ and it was rumored that he had an army behind him and an empire before him. It was a great day—his arrival—to poor Nolan. Burr had not been at the fort an hour before he sent for him. That evening he asked Nolan to take him out in his skiff, to show him a canebrake³⁴ or a cottonwood³⁵ tree, as he said,—really to seduce him; and by the time the sail was over Nolan was enlisted body and soul. From that time, though he did not yet know it, he lived as A MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY.

What Burr meant to do I know no more than you,

dear reader. It is none of our business just now. Only, when the grand catastrophe³⁶ came, and Jefferson³⁷ and the House of Virginia³⁸ of that day undertook to break on the wheel³⁹ all the possible Clarences⁴⁰ of the then House of York,⁴¹ by the great treason trial at Richmond,⁴² some of the lesser fry⁴³ in that distant Mississippi Valley, which was farther from us than Puget's Sound⁴⁴ is to-day, introduced the like novelty on their provincial stage; and, to while away the monotony of the summer at Fort Adams,⁴⁵ got up, for *spectacles*,⁴⁶ a string of court-martials⁴⁷ on the officers there. One and another of the colonels and majors⁴⁸ were tried, and, to fill out the list, little Nolan, against whom, Heaven knows, there was evidence enough,—that he was sick of the service, had been willing to be false to it, and would have obeyed any order to march any-whither with any one who would follow him, had the order only been signed, “By command of His Exc.⁴⁹ A. Burr.” The courts dragged on. The big flies escaped,—rightly for all I know. Nolan was proved guilty enough, as I say; yet you and I would never have heard of him, reader, but that, when the president of the court asked him at the close, whether he wished to say anything to show that he had always been faithful to the United States, he cried out, in a fit of frenzy,⁵⁰—

“D——n the United States! I wish I may never hear of the United States again!”

I suppose he did not know how the words shocked old Colonel Morgan, who was holding the court. Half the officers who sat in it had served through the Revolution, and their lives, not to say their necks, had been risked for the very idea which he so cavalierly⁵¹ cursed in his madness. He, on his part, had

grown up in the West of those days, in the midst of "Spanish plot,"⁵² "Orleans plot,"⁵³ and all the rest. He had been educated on a plantation⁵⁴ where the finest company was a Spanish officer or a French merchant from Orleans.⁵⁵ His education, such as it was, had been perfected in commercial expeditions to Vera Cruz,⁵⁶ and I think he told me his father once hired an Englishman to be a private tutor⁵⁷ for a winter on the plantation. He had spent half his youth with an older brother, hunting horses in Texas;⁵⁸ and, in a word, to him "United States" was scarcely a reality. Yet he had been fed by "United States" for all the years since he had been in the army. He had sworn⁵⁹ on his faith as a Christian to be true to "United States." It was "United States" which gave him the uniform he wore, and the sword by his side. Nay, my poor Nolan, it was only because "United States" had picked you out first as one of her own confidential men of honor, that "A. Burr" cared for you a straw more than for the flatboat men who sailed his ark⁶⁰ for him.

I do not excuse Nolan; I only explain to the reader why he damned his country, and wished he might never hear her name again.

He never did hear her name but once again. From that moment, Sept. 23, 1807, till the day he died, May 11, 1863, he never heard her name again. For that half-century and more he was a man without a country.

Old Morgan, as I said, was terribly shocked. If Nolan had compared George Washington to Benedict Arnold,⁶¹ or had cried, "God save King George,"⁶² Morgan would not have felt worse. He called the

court into his private room, and returned in fifteen minutes, with a face like a sheet, to say,—

“Prisoner, hear the sentence of the Court! The Court decides, subject to the approval of the President, that you never hear the name of the United States again.”

Nolan laughed. But nobody else laughed. Old Morgan was too solemn, and the whole room was hushed dead as night for a minute. Even Nolan lost his swagger in a moment. Then Morgan added,—“Mr. Marshal,⁶³ take the prisoner to Orleans in an armed boat, and deliver him to the naval commander there.”

The marshal gave his orders, and the prisoner was taken out of court.

“Mr. Marshal,” continued old Morgan, “see that no one mentions the United States to the prisoner. Mr. Marshal, make my respects to Lieutenant Mitchell at Orleans, and request him to order that no one shall mention the United States to the prisoner while he is on board ship. You will receive your written orders from the officer on duty here this evening. The court is adjourned without day.⁶⁴”

I have always supposed that Colonel Morgan himself took the proceedings of the court to Washington city, and explained them to Mr. Jefferson. Certain it is that the President approved them,—certain, that is, if I may believe the men who say they have seen his signature.⁶⁵ Before the *Nautilus* got round from New Orleans to the Northern Atlantic coast with the prisoner on board, the sentence had been approved, and he was a man without a country.

The plan then adopted was substantially the same which was necessarily followed ever after. Perhaps

it was suggested by the necessity of sending him by water from Fort Adams and Orleans. The Secretary of the Navy⁶⁶—it must have been the first Crowninshield, though he is a man I do not remember—was requested to put Nolan on board a government vessel bound on a long cruise, and to direct that he should be only so far confined there as to make it certain that he never saw or heard of the country. We had few long cruises then, and the navy was very much out of favor;⁶⁷ and as almost all of this story is traditional, as I have explained, I do not know certainly what his first cruise was. But the commander to whom he was intrusted,—perhaps it was Tingey or Shaw,⁶⁸ though I think it was one of the younger men,—we are all old enough now—regulated the etiquette and the precautions of the affair, and according to his scheme they were carried out, I suppose, till Nolan died.

When I was second officer⁶⁹ of the *Intrepid*, some thirty years after, I saw the original paper of instructions. I have been sorry ever since that I did not copy the whole of it. It ran, however, much in this way:—

“WASHINGTON” (with the date, which must have been late in 1807).

“SIR,—You will receive from Lieutenant Neale the person of Philip Nolan, late a Lieutenant in the United States Army.

“This person on his trial by court-martial expressed with an oath the wish that he might ‘never hear of the United States again.’

“The Court sentenced him to have his wish fulfilled.

“For the present, the execution of the order is intrusted by the President to this department.

"You will take the prisoner on board your ship, and keep him there with such precautions as shall prevent his escape.

"You will provide him with such quarters, rations, and clothing as would be proper for an officer of his late rank, if he were a passenger on your vessel on the business of his Government.

"The gentlemen on board will make any arrangements agreeable to themselves regarding his society. He is to be exposed to no indignity of any kind, nor is he ever unnecessarily to be reminded that he is a prisoner.

"But under no circumstances is he ever to hear of his country or to see any information regarding it; and you will especially caution all the officers under your command to take care that, in the various indulgences which may be granted, this rule, in which his punishment is involved, shall not be broken.

"It is the intention of the Government that he shall never again see the country which he has disowned. Before the end of your cruise you will receive orders which will give effect to this intention.

"Resp'y yours,

"W. SOUTHARD, *for the*

"Sec'y of the Navy."

If I had only preserved the whole of this paper, there would be no break in the beginning of my sketch of this story. For Captain Shaw, if it was he, handed it to his successor in the charge, and he to his, and I suppose the commander of the *Levant* has it to-day as his authority for keeping this man in this mild custody.

The rule adopted on board the ships on which I

have met "the man without a country" was, I think, transmitted from the beginning. No mess⁷⁰ liked to have him permanently, because his presence cut off all talk of home or the prospect of return, of politics or letters, of peace or of war,—cut off more than half the talk men liked to have at sea. But it was always thought too hard that he should never meet the rest of us, except to touch hats, and we finally sank into one system. He was not permitted to talk with the men, unless an officer was by. With officers he had unrestrained intercourse, as far as they and he chose. But he grew shy, though he had favorites: I was one. Then the captain always asked him to dinner on Monday. Every mess in succession took up the invitation in its turn. According to the size of the ship, you had him at your mess more or less often at dinner. His breakfast he ate in his own state-room,—he always had a state-room,—which was where a sentinel,⁷¹ or somebody on the watch,⁷² could see the door. And whatever else he ate or drank, he ate or drank alone. Sometimes, when the marines⁷³ or sailors had any special jollification, they were permitted to invite "Plain-Buttons," as they called him. Then Nolan was sent with some officer, and the men were forbidden to speak of home while he was there. I believe the theory was that the sight of his punishment did them good. They called him "Plain-Buttons," because, while he always chose to wear a regulation army-uniform, he was not permitted to wear the army-button, for the reason that it bore either the initials or the insignia of the country he had disowned.

I remember, soon after I joined the navy, I was on shore with some of the older officers from our ship

and from the *Brandywine*, which we had met at Alexandria.⁷⁴ We had leave to make a party and go up to Cairo⁷⁵ and the Pyramids.⁷⁶ As we jogged along (you went on donkeys then), some of the gentlemen (we boys called them "Dons," but the phrase was long since changed) fell to talking about Nolan, and some one told the system which was adopted from the first about his books and other reading. As he was almost never permitted to go on shore, even though the vessel lay in port for months, his time at the best hung heavy; and everybody was permitted to lend him books, if they were not published in America and made no allusion to it. These were common enough in the old days, when people in the other hemisphere⁷⁷ talked of the United States as little as we do of Paraguay.⁷⁸ He had almost all the foreign papers that came into the ship, sooner or later; only somebody must go over them first, and cut out any advertisement or stray paragraph that alluded to America. This was a little cruel sometimes, when the back of what was cut out might be as innocent as Hesiod.⁷⁹ Right in the midst of one of Napoleon's⁸⁰ battles, or one of Canning's⁸¹ speeches, poor Nolan would find a great hole, because on the back of the page of that paper there had been an advertisement of a packet⁸² for New York, or a scrap from the President's message.⁸³ I say this was the first time I ever heard of this plan, which afterwards I had enough, and more than enough, to do with. I remember it, because poor Phillips, who was of the party, as soon as the allusion to reading was made, told a story of something which happened at the Cape of Good Hope⁸⁴ on Nolan's first voyage; and it is the only thing I ever knew of that voyage.

They had touched at the Cape, and had done the civil thing⁸⁵ with the English Admiral⁸⁶ and the fleet, and then, leaving for a long cruise up the Indian Ocean, Phillips had borrowed a lot of English books from an officer, which, in those days, as indeed in these, was quite a windfall. Among them, as the Devil would order, was the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*,⁸⁷ which they had all of them heard of, but which most of them had never seen. I think it could not have been published long. Well, nobody thought there could be any risk of anything national in that, though Phillips swore old Shaw had cut out the *Tempest* from Shakespeare before he let Nolan have it, because he said "the Bermudas⁸⁸ ought to be ours, and, by Jove,⁸⁹ should be one day." So Nolan was permitted to join the circle one afternoon when a lot of them sat on deck smoking and reading aloud. People do not do such things so often now; but when I was young we got rid of a great deal of time so. Well, so it happened that in his turn Nolan took the book and read to the others; and he read very well, as I know. Nobody in the circle knew a line of the poem, only it was all magic⁹⁰ and Border chivalry,⁹¹ and was ten thousand years ago. Poor Nolan read steadily through the fifth canto,⁹² stopped a minute and drank something, and then began, without a thought of what was coming,—

"Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,"—

It seems impossible to us that anybody ever heard this for the first time; but all these fellows did then, and poor Nolan himself went on, still unconsciously or mechanically,—

"This is my own, my native land!"

Then they all saw something was to pay; but he expected to get through, I suppose, turned a little pale, but plunged on,—

"Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned
From wandering on a foreign strand?—
If such there breathe, go, mark him well,"—

By this time the men were all beside themselves, wishing there was any way to make him turn over two pages; but he had not quite presence of mind for that; he gagged a little, colored crimson, and staggered on,—

"For him no minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim,
Despite these titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentrated all in self,"—

and here the poor fellow choked, could not go on,⁹³ but started up, swung the book into the sea, vanished into his state-room, "and by Jove," said Phillips, "we did not see him for two months again. And I had to make up some beggarly story to that English surgeon why I did not return his Walter Scott⁹⁴ to him."

That story shows about the time when Nolan's braggadocio⁹⁵ must have broken down. At first, they said, he took a very high tone, considered his imprisonment a mere farce, affected to enjoy the voyage, and all that; but Phillips said that after he came out of his state-room he never was the same man again.

He never read aloud again, unless it was the Bible or Shakespeare, or something else he was sure of. But it was not that merely. He never entered in with the other young men exactly as a companion again. He was always shy afterwards, when I knew him,—very seldom spoke, unless he was spoken to, except to a very few friends. He lighted up occasionally,—I remember late in his life hearing him fairly eloquent on something which had been suggested to him by one of Fléchier's⁹⁶ sermons,—but generally he had the nervous, tired look of a heartwounded man.

When Captain Shaw was coming home,—if, as I say, it was Shaw,—rather to the surprise of everybody they made⁹⁷ one of the Windward Islands,⁹⁸ and lay off and on⁹⁹ for nearly a week. The boys said the officers were sick of salt-junk,¹⁰⁰ and meant to have turtle-soup¹⁰¹ before they came home. But after several days the *Warren* came to the same rendezvous;¹⁰² they exchanged signals; she sent to Phillips and these homeward-bound men letters and papers, and told them she was outward-bound, perhaps to the Mediterranean,¹⁰³ and took poor Nolan and his traps on the boat back to try his second cruise. He looked very blank when he was told to get ready to join her. He had known enough of the signs of the sky to know that till that moment he was going "home." But this was a distinct evidence of something he had not thought of, perhaps,—that there was no going home for him, even to a prison. And this was the first of twenty such transfers, which brought him sooner or later into half our best vessels, but which kept him all his life at least some hundred miles from the country he had hoped he might never hear of again.

It may have been on that second cruise,—it was once when he was up the Mediterranean,—that Mrs. Graff, the celebrated Southern beauty of those days, danced with him. They had been lying a long time in the Bay of Naples,¹⁰⁴ and the officers were very intimate in the English fleet, and there had been great festivities, and our men thought they must give a great ball on board the ship. How they ever did it on board the *Warren* I am sure I do not know. Perhaps it was not the *Warren*, or perhaps ladies did not take up so much room¹⁰⁵ as they do now. They wanted to use Nolan's state-room for something, and they hated to do it without asking him to the ball; so the captain said they might ask him, if they would be responsible that he did not talk with the wrong people, "who would give him intelligence¹⁰⁶." So the dance went on, the finest party that had ever been known, I dare say; for I never heard of a man-of-war ball that was not. For ladies they had the family of the American consul,¹⁰⁷ one or two travellers who had adventured so far, and a nice bevy¹⁰⁸ of English girls and matrons,¹⁰⁹ perhaps Lady Hamilton¹¹⁰ herself.

Well, different officers relieved each other in standing and talking with Nolan in a friendly way, so as to be sure that nobody else spoke to him. The dancing went on with spirit, and after a while even the fellows who took this honorary guard of Nolan ceased to fear any *contre-temps*.¹¹¹ Only when some English lady—Lady Hamilton, as I said, perhaps—called for a set of "American dances," an odd thing happened. Everybody then danced contra-dances.¹¹² The black band,¹¹³ nothing loath, conferred as to what "American dances" were, and started off with "Virginia Reel,¹¹⁴" which they followed with "Money-Musk," which, in

its turn in those days, should have been followed by "The Old Thirteen." But just as Dick, the leader, tapped for his fiddles to begin, and bent forward, about to say, in true negro state, " 'The Old Thirteen,' gentlemen and ladies!" as he had said " 'Virginny Reel,' if you please!" and " 'Money-Musk,' if you please!" the captain's boy tapped him on the shoulder, whispered to him, and he did not announce the name of the dance; he merely bowed, began on the air, and they all fell to,—the officers teaching the English girls the figure, but not telling them why it had no name.

But that is not the story I started to tell.—As the dancing went on, Nolan and our fellows all got at ease, as I said,—so much so, that it seemed quite natural for him to bow to that splendid Mrs. Graff, and say,—

"I hope you have not forgotten me, Miss Rutledge. Shall I have the honor of dancing?"

He did it so quickly that Shubrick, who was by him, could not hinder him. She laughed and said,—

"I am not Miss Rutledge any longer, Mr. Nolan; but I will dance all the same,"—just nodded to Shubrick, as if to say he must leave Mr. Nolan to her, and led him off to the place where the dance was forming.

Nolan thought he had got his chance. He had known her at Philadelphia, and at other places had met her, and this was a Godsend. You could not talk in contra-dances, as you do in cotillions,¹¹⁵ or even in the pauses of waltzing; but there were chances for tongues and sounds, as well as for eyes and blushes. He began with her travels, and Europe, and Vesuvius,¹¹⁶ and the French; and then, when they had worked down, and had that long talking-time at the

bottom of the set, he said boldly,—a little pale, she said, as she told me the story years after,—

“And what do you hear from home, Mrs. Graff?”

And that splendid creature looked through him. Jove! how she must have looked through him!

“Home!! Mr. Nolan!!! I thought you were the man who never wanted to hear of home again!”—and she walked directly up the deck to her husband, and left poor Nolan, alone, as he always was.—He did not dance again.

I cannot give any history of him in order: nobody can now: and, indeed, I am not trying to. These are the traditions, which I sort out as I believe them, from the myths which have been told about this man for forty years. The lies that have been told about him are legion. The fellows used to say he was the “Iron Mask”;¹¹⁷ and poor George Pons went to his grave in the belief that this was the author of “Junius,”¹¹⁸ who was being punished for his celebrated libel¹¹⁹ on Thomas Jefferson. Pons was not very strong in the historical line.

A happier story than either of these I have told is of the War.¹²⁰ That came along soon after. I have heard this affair told in three or four ways,—and, indeed, it may have happened more than once. But which ship¹²¹ it was on I cannot tell. However, in one, at least, of the great frigate¹²²-duels¹²³ with the English, in which the navy was really baptized, it happened that a round shot from the enemy entered one of our ports¹²⁴ square, and took right down the officer of the gun himself, and almost every man of the gun’s crew. Now you may say what you choose about courage, but that is not a nice thing to see. But, as the men who were not killed picked them-

selves up, and as they and the surgeon's people were carrying off the bodies, there appeared Nolan, in his shirt-sleeves, with the rammer in his hand, and, just as if he had been the officer, told them off with authority,—who should go to the cockpit¹²⁵ with the wounded men, who should stay with him,—perfectly cheery, and with that way which makes men feel sure all is right and is going to be right. And he finished loading the gun with his own hands, aimed it, and bade the men fire. And there he stayed, captain of that gun, keeping those fellows in spirits, till the enemy struck,¹²⁶—sitting on the carriage while the gun was cooling, though he was exposed all the time,—showing them easier ways to handle heavy shot,—making the raw hands laugh at their own blunders,—and when the gun cooled again, getting it loaded and fired twice as often as any other gun on the ship. The captain walked forward by way of encouraging the men, and Nolan touched his hat and said,—

“I am showing them how we do this in the artillery,¹²⁷ sir.”

And this is the part of the story where all the legends agree; that the Commodore¹²⁸ said,—

“I see you do, and I thank you, sir; and I shall never forget this day, sir, and you never shall, sir.”

And after the whole thing was over, and he had had the Englishman's sword,¹²⁹ in the midst of the state and ceremony of the quarter-deck,¹³⁰ he said,—

“Where is Mr. Nolan? Ask Mr. Nolan to come here.”

And when Nolan came, the captain said,—

“Mr. Nolan, we are all very grateful to you to-day; you are one of us to-day; you will be named in the despatches.¹³¹”

And then the old man took off his own sword of ceremony, and gave it to Nolan, and made him put it on. The man told me this who saw it. Nolan cried like a baby, and well he might. He had not worn a sword since that infernal day at Fort Adams. But always afterwards, on occasions of ceremony, he wore that quaint old French sword of the Commodore's.

The captain did mention him in the despatches. It was always said he asked that he might be pardoned. He wrote a special letter to the Secretary of War.¹³² But nothing ever came of it. As I said, that was about the time when they began to ignore the whole transaction at Washington, and when Nolan's imprisonment began to carry itself on because there was nobody to stop it without any new orders from home.

I have heard it said that he was with Porter¹³³ when he took possession of the Nukahiwa Islands.¹³⁴ Not this Porter,¹³⁵ you know, but old Porter, his father, Essex Porter,—that is, the old Essex Porter, not this Essex.¹³⁶ As an artillery officer, who had seen service in the West, Nolan knew more about fortifications,¹³⁷ embrasures,¹³⁸ ravelins,¹³⁹ stockades,¹⁴⁰ and all that, than any of them did; and he worked with a right good will in fixing that battery¹⁴¹ all right. I have always thought it was a pity Porter did not leave him in command there with Gamble.¹⁴² That would have settled all the question about his punishment. We should have kept the islands, and at this moment we should have one station¹⁴³ in the Pacific Ocean. Our French friends, too, when they wanted this little watering-place, would have found it was preoccupied.¹⁴⁴ But Madison and the Virginians, of course, flung all that away.

All that was near fifty years ago. If Nolan was thirty then, he must have been near eighty when he died. He looked sixty when he was forty. But he never seemed to me to change a hair afterwards. As I imagine his life, from what I have seen and heard of it, he must have been in every sea, and yet almost never on land. He must have known, in a formal¹⁴⁵ way, more officers in our service than any man living knows. He told me once, with a grave smile, that no man in the world lived so methodical a life as he. "You know the boys say I am the Iron Mask, and you know how busy he was." He said it did not do for any one to try to read all the time, more than to do anything else all the time; but that he read just five hours a day. "Then," he said, "I keep up my note-books,¹⁴⁶ writing in them at such and such hours from what I have been reading; and I include in these my scrap-books." These were very curious indeed. He had six or eight, of different subjects. There was one of History, one of Natural Science,¹⁴⁷ one which he called "Odds and Ends." But they were not merely books of extracts from newspapers. They had bits of plants and ribbons, shells tied on, and carved scraps of bone and wood, which he had taught the men to cut for him, and they were beautifully illustrated. He drew admirably. He had some of the funniest drawings there and some of the most pathetic, that I have ever seen in my life. I wonder who will have Nolan's scrap-books.

Well, he said his reading and his notes were his profession,¹⁴⁸ and that they took five hours and two hours, respectively, of each day. "Then," said he, "every man should have a diversion¹⁴⁹ as well as a profession. My Natural History is my diversion." That

took two hours a day more. The men used to bring him birds and fish, but on a long cruise he had to satisfy himself with centipedes and cockroaches¹⁵⁰ and such small game. He was the only naturalist I ever met who knew anything about the habits of the house-fly and the mosquito.¹⁵¹ All those people can tell you whether they are *Lepidoptera*¹⁵² or *Steptoptera*¹⁵³; but as for telling you how you can get rid of them, or how they get away from you when you strike them,—why Linnæus¹⁵⁴ knew as little of that as John Foy¹⁵⁵ the idiot did. These nine hours made Nolan's regular daily "occupation." The rest of the time he talked or walked. Till he grew very old, he went aloft¹⁵⁶ a great deal. He always kept up his exercise; and I never heard that he was ill. If any other man was ill, he was the kindest nurse in the world; and he knew more than half the surgeons do. Then if anybody was sick or died, or if the captain wanted him to on any other occasion, he was always ready to read prayers. I have said that he read beautifully.

My own acquaintance with Philip Nolan began six or eight years after the War with England, on my first voyage after I was appointed a midshipman.¹⁵⁷ It was in the first days after our Slave-Trade treaty,¹⁵⁸ while the Reigning House,¹⁵⁹ which was still the House of Virginia, had still a sort of sentimentalism about the suppression of the horrors of the Middle Passage,¹⁶⁰ and something was sometimes done that way. We were in the South Atlantic on that business. From the time I joined, I believe I thought Nolan was a sort of lay chaplain,¹⁶¹—a chaplain with a blue coat. I never asked about him. Everything in the ship was strange to me. I knew it was green to ask questions, and I suppose I thought there was a "Plain-Buttons"

on every ship. We had him to dine in our mess once a week, and the caution was given that on that day nothing was to be said about home. But if they had told us not to say anything about the planet Mars¹⁶² or the Book of Deuteronomy,¹⁶³ I should not have asked why; there were a great many things which seemed to me to have as little reason.¹⁶⁴ I first came to understand anything about *the man without a country* one day when we overhauled a dirty little schooner¹⁶⁵ which had slaves on board. An officer was sent to take charge of her, and, after a few minutes, he sent back his boat to ask that some one might be sent him who could speak Portuguese.¹⁶⁶ We were all looking over the rail when the message came, and we all wished we could interpret, when the captain asked who spoke Portuguese. But none of the officers did; and just as the captain was sending forward to ask if any of the people could, Nolan stepped out and said he should be glad to interpret, if the captain wished, as he understood the language. The captain thanked him, fitted out another boat with him, and in this boat it was my luck to go. When we got there, it was such a scene as you seldom see, and never want to. Nastiness beyond account, and chaos¹⁶⁷ run loose in the midst of the nastiness. There were not a great many of the negroes; but by way of making what there were understand that they were free, Vaughan had had their hand-cuffs and ankle-cuffs knocked off, and, for convenience' sake, was putting them upon the rascals of the schooner's crew. The negroes were, most of them, out of the hold,¹⁶⁸ and swarming all round the dirty deck, with a central throng surrounding Vaughan and addressing

him in every dialect, and *patois*¹⁶⁹ of a dialect, from the Zulu click¹⁷⁰ up to the Parisian of Beledjereed.¹⁷¹

As we came on deck, Vaughan looked down from a hogshead,¹⁷² on which he had mounted in desperation, and said,—

“For God’s love, is there anybody who can make these wretches understand something? The men gave them rum, and that did not quiet them. I knocked that big fellow down twice, and that did not soothe him. And then I talked Choctaw¹⁷³ to all of them together; and I’ll be hanged if they understood that as well as they understood the English.”

Nolan said he could speak Portuguese, and one or two fine-looking Kroomen¹⁷⁴ were dragged out, who, as it had been found already, had worked for the Portuguese on the coast at Fernando Po.¹⁷⁵

“Tell them they are free,” said Vaughan; “and tell them that these rascals are to be hanged as soon as we can get rope enough.”

Nolan “put that into Spanish,¹⁷⁶”—that is, he explained it in such Portuguese as the Kroomen could understand, and they in turn to such of the negroes as could understand them. Then there was such a yell of delight, clinching of fists, leaping and dancing, kissing of Nolan’s feet, and a general rush made to the hogshead by way of spontaneous worship of Vaughan, as the *deus ex machina*¹⁷⁷ of the occasion.

“Tell them,” said Vaughan, well pleased, “that I will take them all to Cape Palmas.”¹⁷⁸

This did not answer so well. Cape Palmas was practically as far from the homes of most of them as New Orleans or Rio Janeiro¹⁷⁹ was; that is, they would be eternally separated from home there. And their interpreters, as we could understand, instantly

said, "*Ah, non Palmas,*" and began to propose infinite other expedients¹⁸⁰ in most voluble¹⁸¹ language. Vaughan was rather disappointed at this result of his liberality, and asked Nolan eagerly what they said. The drops stood on poor Nolan's white forehead, as he hushed the men down, and said:—

"He says, 'Not Palmas.' He says, 'Take us home, take us to our own country, take us to our own house, take us to our own pickaninnies¹⁸² and our own women.' He says he has an old father and mother, who will die if they do not see him. And this one says he left his people all sick, and paddled down to Fernando to beg the white doctor to come and help them, and that these devils caught him in the bay just in sight of home, and that he has never seen anybody from home since then. And this one says," choked out Nolan, "that he has not heard a word from his home in six months, while he has been locked up in an infernal barracoön."¹⁸³

Vaughan always said he grew gray himself while Nolan struggled through this interpretation. I, who did not understand anything of the passion involved in it, saw that the very elements were melting in the fervent heat,¹⁸⁴ and that something was to pay somewhere. Even the negroes themselves stopped howling, as they saw Nolan's agony, and Vaughan's almost equal agony of sympathy. As quick as he could get words, he said,—

"Tell them yes, yes, yes; tell them they shall go to the Mountains of the Moon,¹⁸⁵ if they will. If I sail the schooner through the Great White Desert,¹⁸⁶ they shall go home!"

And after some fashion Nolan said so. And then

they all fell to kissing him again, and wanted to rub his nose with theirs.¹⁸⁷

But he could not stand it long; and getting Vaughan to say he might go back, he beckoned me down into our boat. As we lay back in the stern-sheets¹⁸⁸ and the men gave way, he said to me:—"Youngster, let that show you what it is to be without a family, without a home, and without a country. And if you are ever tempted to say a word or to do a thing that shall put a bar between you and your family, your home, and your country, pray God in his mercy to take you that instant home to His own heaven. Stick by your family, boy; forget you have a self, while you do everything for them. Think of your home, boy; write and send, and talk about it. Let it be nearer and nearer to your thought the farther you have to travel from it; and rush back to it, when you are free, as that poor black slave is doing now. And for your country, boy," and the words rattled in his throat, "and for that flag," and he pointed to the ship, "never dream a dream but of serving her as she bids you, though the service carry you through a thousand hells. No matter what happens to you, no matter who flatters you or who abuses you, never look at another flag, never let a night pass but you pray God to bless that flag. Remember, boy, that behind all these men you have to do with, behind officers, and government, and people even, there is the Country Herself, your Country, and that you belong to Her as you belong to your own mother. Stand by Her, boy, as you would stand by your mother if those devils there had got hold of her to-day!"

I was frightened to death by his calm, hard passion; but I blundered out that I would, by all that was

holy, and that I had never thought of doing anything else. He hardly seemed to hear me; but he did, almost in a whisper, say,—“O, if anybody had said so to me when I was of your age!”

I think it was this half-confidence of his, which I never abused, for I never told this story till now, which afterward made us great friends. He was very kind to me. Often he sat up, or even got up, at night to walk the deck with me, when it was my watch. He explained to me a great deal of my mathematics, and I owe to him my taste for mathematics. He lent me books, and helped me about my reading. He never alluded so directly to his story again; but from one and another officer I have learned, in thirty years, what I am telling. When we parted from him in St. Thomas¹⁹⁰ harbor, at the end of our cruise, I was more sorry than I can tell. I was very glad to meet him again in 1830; and later in life, when I thought I had some influence in Washington, I moved heaven and earth to have him discharged. But it was like getting a ghost out of prison. They pretended there was no such man, and never was such a man. They will say so at the Department now! Perhaps they do not know. It will not be the first thing in the service of which the Department appears to know nothing!

There is a story that Nolan met Burr once on one of our vessels, when a party of Americans came on board in the Mediterranean. But this I believe to be a lie; or, rather, it is a myth *ben trovato*,¹⁹¹ involving a tremendous blowing-up with which he sunk Burr,—asking him how he liked to be “without a country.” But it is clear, from Burr’s life, that nothing of the sort could have happened; and I mention this only

as an illustration of the stories which get a-going where there is the least mystery at bottom.

¹⁹²So poor Philip Nolan had his wish fulfilled. I know but one fate more dreadful: it is the fate reserved for those men who shall have one day to exile themselves from their country because they have attempted her ruin, and shall have at the same time to see the prosperity and honor to which she rises when she has rid herself of them and their iniquities. The wish of poor Nolan, as we all learned to call him, not because his punishment was too great, but because his repentance was so clear, was precisely the wish of every Bragg and Beauregard¹⁹³ who broke a soldier's oath two years ago,¹⁹⁴ and of every Maury and Barron¹⁹⁵ who broke a sailor's. I do not know how often they have repented. I do know that they have done all that in them lay that they might have no country,—that all the honors, associations, memories, and hopes which belong to "country" might be broken up into little shreds¹⁹⁶ and distributed to the winds. I know, too, that their punishment, as they vegetate through what is left of life to them in wretched Boulognes¹⁹⁷ and Leicester Squares,¹⁹⁸ where they are destined to upbraid¹⁹⁹ each other till they die, will have all the agony of Nolan's, with the added pang that every one who sees them will see them to despise and to execrate²⁰⁰ them. They will have their wish, like him.

For him, poor fellow, he repented of his folly, and then, like a man, submitted to the fate he had asked for. He never intentionally added to the difficulty or delicacy of the charge of those who had him in hold. Accidents would happen; but they never happened from his fault. Lieutenant Truxton²⁰¹ told me, that,

when Texas was annexed, there was a careful discussion among the officers, whether they should get hold of Nolan's handsome set of maps and cut Texas out of it,—from the map of the world and the map of Mexico. The United States had been cut out when the atlas was bought for him. But it was voted, rightly enough, that to do this would be virtually to reveal to him what had happened, or, as Harry Cole said, to make him think Old Burr had succeeded. So it was from no fault of Nolan's that a great botch happened at my own table, when, for a short time, I was in command of the *George Washington* corvette, on the South American station.²⁰² We were lying in the *La Plata*,²⁰³ and some of the officers, who had been on shore and had just joined again, were entertaining us with accounts of their misadventures in riding the half-wild horses of Buenos Ayres.²⁰⁴ Nolan was at table, and was in an unusually bright and talkative mood. Some story of a tumble reminded him of an adventure of his own, when he was catching wild horses in Texas with his adventurous cousin²⁰⁵ at a time when he must have been quite a boy. He told the story with a good deal of spirit,—so much so, that the silence which often follows a good story hung over the table for an instant, to be broken by Nolan himself. For he asked perfectly unconsciously:—

“Pray, what has become of Texas? After the Mexicans got their independence,²⁰⁶ I thought that province of Texas would come forward very fast. It is really one of the finest regions on earth; it is the Italy of this continent. But I have not seen or heard of Texas for nearly twenty years.”

There were two Texan officers at the table. The reason he had never heard of Texas was that Texas

and her affairs had been painfully cut out of his newspapers since Austin²⁰⁷ began his settlements; so that, while he read of Honduras²⁰⁸ and Tamaulipas,²⁰⁹ and, till quite lately, of California,²¹⁰ this virgin province, in which his brother had travelled so far, and, I believe, had died, had ceased to be to him. Waters and Williams, the two Texas men, looked grimly at each other, and tried not to laugh. Edward Morris had his attention attracted by the third link in the chain of the captain's chandelier. Watrous was seized with a convulsion of sneezing. Nolan himself saw that something was to pay, he did not know what. And I, as master of the feast, had to say,—

“Texas is out of the map, Mr. Nolan. Have you seen Captain Back's²¹¹ curious account of Sir Thomas Roe's Welcome?”²¹²

After that cruise I never saw Nolan again. I wrote to him at least twice a year, for in that voyage we became even confidentially intimate; but he never wrote to me. The other men tell me that in those fifteen years he *aged* very fast, as well he might indeed, but that he was still the same gentle, uncomplaining, silent sufferer that he ever was, bearing as best he could his self-appointed punishment,—rather less social, perhaps, with new men whom he did not know, but more anxious, apparently, than ever to serve and befriend and teach the boys, some of whom fairly seemed to worship him. And now it seems the dear old fellow is dead. He has found a home at last, and a country.

Since writing this, and while considering whether or no I would print it, as a warning to the young Nolans and Vallandighams²¹³ and Tatnalls²¹⁴ of to-day of what it is to throw away a country, I have

received from Danforth, who is on board the *Levant*, a letter which gives an account of Nolan's last hours. It removes all my doubts about telling this story.

To understand the first words of the letter, the non-professional reader should remember that after 1817 the position of every officer who had Nolan in charge was one of the greatest delicacy. The government had failed to renew the order of 1807 regarding him. What was a man to do? Should he let him go? What, then, if he were called to account by the Department for violating the order of 1807? Should he keep him? What, then, if Nolan should be liberated some day, and should bring an action for false imprisonment or kidnapping against every man who had had him in charge? I urged and pressed this upon Southard, and I have reason to think that other officers did the same thing. But the Secretary always said, as they so often do at Washington, that there were no special orders to give, and that we must act on our own judgment. That means, "If you succeed, you will be sustained; if you fail, you will be disavowed." Well, as Danforth says, all that is over now, though I do not know but I expose myself to a criminal prosecution on the evidence of the very revelation I am making.

Here is the letter:—

"LEVANT, 2° 2' S. @ 131° W.

"DEAR FRED,—I try to find heart and life to tell you that it is all over with dear old Nolan. I have been with him on this voyage more than I ever was, and I can understand wholly now the way in which you used to speak of the dear old fellow. I could see that he was not strong, but I had no idea the end was

so near. The doctor has been watching him very carefully, and yesterday morning came to me and told me that Nolan was not so well, and had not left his state-room,—a thing I never remember before. He had let the doctor come and see him as he lay there,—the first time the doctor had been in the state-room,—and he said he should like to see me. Oh, dear! do you remember the mysteries we boys used to invent about his room in the old *Intrepid* days? Well, I went in, and there, to be sure, the poor fellow lay in his berth, smiling pleasantly as he gave me his hand, but looking very frail. I could not help a glance round, which showed me what a little shrine he had made of the box he was lying in. The stars and stripes were triced²¹⁵ up above and around a picture of Washington, and he had painted a majestic eagle, with lightnings blazing from his beak and his foot just clasping the whole globe, which his wings overshadowed. The dear old boy saw my glance, and said, with a sad smile. ‘Here, you see, I have a country!’ And then he pointed to the foot of his bed, where I had not seen before a great map of the United States, as he had drawn it from memory, and which he had there to look upon as he lay. Quaint, queer old names were on it, in large letters: ‘Indiana Territory,’ ‘Mississippi Territory,’ and ‘Louisiana Territory,’ as I suppose our fathers learned such things: but the old fellow had patched in Texas, too; he had carried his western boundary all the way to the Pacific, but on that shore he had defined nothing.

“‘O Danforth,’ he said, ‘I know I am dying. I cannot get home. Surely you will tell me something now?—Stop! stop! Do not speak till I say what I am sure you know, that there is not in this ship, that

there is not in America,—God bless her!—a more loyal man than I. There cannot be a man who loves the old flag as I do, or prays for it as I do, or hopes for it as I do. There are thirty-four²¹⁶ stars in it now, Danforth. I thank God for that, though I do not know what their names are. There has never been one taken away: I thank God for that. I know by that, that there has never been any successful Burr. O Danforth, Danforth,' he sighed out, 'how like a wretched night's dream a boy's idea of personal fame or of separate sovereignty²¹⁷ seems, when one looks back on it after such a life as mine! But tell me,—tell me something,—tell me everything, Danforth, before I die!'

"Ingham, I swear to you that I felt like a monster that I had not told him everything before. Danger or no danger, delicacy or no delicacy, who was I, that I should have been acting the tyrant all this time over this dear, sainted old man, who had years ago expiated,²¹⁸ in his whole manhood's life, the madness of a boy's treason? 'Mr. Nolan,' said I, 'I will tell you everything you ask about. Only, where shall I begin?'

"Oh, the blessed smile that crept over his white face! and he pressed my hand and said, 'God bless you!' 'Tell me their names,' he said, and he pointed to the stars on the flag. 'The last I know is Ohio.²¹⁹ My father lived in Kentucky. But I have guessed Michigan and Indiana and Mississippi,—that was where Fort Adams is,—they make twenty. But where are your other fourteen? You have not cut up any of the old ones, I hope?'

"Well, that was not a bad text, and I told him the names, in as good order as I could, and he bade me

take down his beautiful map and draw them in as I best could with my pencil. He was wild with delight about Texas, told me how his brother died there; he had marked a gold cross near where he supposed his brother's grave was; and he had guessed at Texas. Then he was delighted as he saw California and Oregon;—that, he said, he had suspected partly, because he had never been permitted to land on that shore, though the ships were there so much. ‘And the men,’ said he, laughing, ‘brought off a great deal²²⁰ besides furs.’ Then he went back—heavens, how far!—to ask about the Chesapeake,²²¹ and what was done to Barron²²² for surrendering her to the Leopard, and whether Burr ever tried again,—and he ground his teeth with the only passion he showed. But in a moment that was over, and he said, ‘God forgive me, for I am sure I forgive him.’ Then he asked about the old war,—told me the true story of his serving the gun the day we took the ‘Java,’²²³—asked about dear old David Porter, as he called him. Then he settled down more quietly, and very happily, to hear me tell in an hour the history of fifty years.

“How I wished it had been somebody who knew something! But I did as well as I could. I told him of the English war. I told him about Fulton²²⁴ and the steamboat beginning. I told him about old Scott²²⁵ and Jackson²²⁶; told him all I could think of about the Mississippi, and New Orleans, and Texas, and his own old Kentucky. And do you think, he asked who was in command of the ‘Legion of the West.’ I told him it was a very gallant officer named Grant,²²⁷ and that, by our last news, he was about to establish his head-quarters at Vicksburg.²²⁸ Then, ‘Where was Vicksburg?’ I worked that out on the map; it was

about a hundred miles, more or less, above his old Fort Adams; and I thought Fort Adams must be a ruin now. 'It must be at old Vick's plantation,' said he: 'well, that is a change!'

"I tell you, Ingham, it was a hard thing to condense the history of half a century into that talk with a sick man. And I do not know what I told him,—of emigration, and the means of it,—of steamboats, and railroads, and telegraphs,—of inventions, and books, and literature,—of the colleges and West Point²²⁹ and the Naval School,²³⁰—but with the queerest interruptions that ever you heard. You see it was Robinson Crusoe²³¹ asking all the accumulated questions of fifty-six years!

"I remember he asked all of a sudden, who was president now; and when I told him, he asked if Old Abe²³² was General Benjamin Lincoln's²³³ son. He said he met old General Lincoln, when he was quite a boy himself, at some Indian treaty. I said no, that Old Abe was a Kentuckian like himself, but I could not tell him of what family; he had worked up from the ranks. 'Good for him!' cried Nolan; 'I am glad of that. As I have brooded and wondered, I have thought our danger was in keeping up those regular successions in the first families.'²³⁴ Then I got talking about my visit to Washington. I told him of meeting the Oregon Congressman,²³⁵ Harding; I told him about the Smithsonian²³⁶ and the Exploring Expedition;²³⁷ I told him about the Capitol,²³⁸—and the statues for the pediment,²³⁹—and Crawford's Liberty,²⁴⁰—and Greenough's Washington.²⁴¹ Ingham, I told him everything I could think of that would show the grandeur of his country and its pros-

perity; but I could not make up my mouth to tell him a word about this infernal Rebellion!²⁴²

"And he drank it in, and enjoyed it as I cannot tell you. He grew more and more silent, yet I never thought he was tired or faint. I gave him a glass of water, but he just wet his lips, and told me not to go away. Then he asked me to bring the Presbyterian²⁴³ 'Book of Public Prayer,' which lay there, and said, with a smile, that it would open at the right place, and so it did. There was his double red mark down the page; and I knelt down and read, and he repeated with me, 'For ourselves and our country, O gracious God, we thank Thee, that notwithstanding our manifold transgressions of Thy holy laws, Thou has continued to us Thy marvellous kindness,'—and so to the end of that thanksgiving. Then he turned to the end of the same book, and I read the words more familiar to me: 'Most heartily we beseech Thee with Thy favor to behold and bless Thy servant, the President of the United States, and all others in authority,' and the rest of the Episcopal²⁴³ collect.²⁴⁴ 'Danforth,' said he, 'I have repeated those prayers night and morning, it is now fifty-five years.' And then he said he would go to sleep. He bent me down over him and kissed me; and he said, 'Look in my Bible, Danforth, when I am gone.' And I went away.

"But I had no thought it was the end. I thought he was tired and would sleep. I knew he was happy, and I wanted him to be alone.

"But in an hour, when the doctor went in gently, he found Nolan had breathed his life away with a smile. He had something pressed close to his lips. It was his father's badge of the Order of Cincinnati.²⁴⁵

"We looked in his Bible, and there was a slip of paper at the place where he had marked the text:—

"They desire a country, even a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city."²⁴⁶

"On this slip of paper he had written:—

"Bury me in the sea; it has been my home, and I love it. But will not some one set up a stone²⁴⁷ for my memory at Fort Adams or at Orleans, that my disgrace may not be more than I ought to bear? Say on it:—

"*'In Memory of*

"PHILIP NOLAN,

"*'Lieutenant of the Army of the United States.*

"He loved his country as no other man has loved her; but no man deserved less at her hands.'"

NOTES

1. **I.** The tale is supposed to be told by Frederick Ingham, a retired officer of the United States Navy.
2. **few readers.** Although this death notice never appeared in the *New York Herald* or elsewhere, more than one person told Dr. Hale that they had read the notice.
3. **New York Herald.** One of the great daily papers of the metropolis. It was founded by James Gordon Bennett in 1835 and in 1924 it was combined with another great newspaper, the *New York Tribune*.
4. **corvette.** In the days of sailing ships a corvette was a sloop-of-war. It ranked next below a frigate.
5. **Levant.** Dr. Hale intentionally used this name, because the *Levant* had disappeared at

sea in 1860 and no one knew what had become of her.

6. **Lat. 2°11' S. Long. 131°W.** As a clue to the hoax Dr. Hale had intended to locate the *Levant* on top of the Andes.

7. **Philip Nolan.** Dr. Hale says he took this name from "the preposterous memoirs of General James Wilkinson." He had the impression that the man associated with General Wilkinson was named Stephen and says "as Philip and Stephen were both evangelists in the Bible, I named my man Philip Nolan." Dr. Hale continues, "It was not for a year after, that, in looking at Wilkinson's 'Memoirs' again, I found to my amazement, not to say my dismay, that Wilkinson's partner was named Philip Nolan. We had, therefore, two Philip Nolans, one a real historical character, who was murdered by the Spaniards on the 21st of March, 1801, at Waco in Texas; the other a purely imaginary character invented by myself." * * * * *

"I have since done my best to repair the error by which I gave Philip Nolan's name to another person, by telling the story of his fate in a book called "Philip Nolan's Friends."

8. **Mission.** The Jesuits established many centres of missionary enterprise in the region of the Great Lakes and the Mississippi valley. With the conversion of the Indians they combined distinguished achievements in exploration.
9. **Mackinac.** The Strait of Mackinac joins Lake Michigan and Lake Huron, two of the Great Lakes.
10. **Lake Superior.** This lake is also one of The Great Lakes. It is the largest body of fresh water in the world.
11. **stubble.** Stumps of grass or grain left in the ground after the crop is cut.
12. **fortnight.** Two weeks.

13. **three year's cruise.** A long cruise or voyage of a United States naval vessel regularly lasts three years.
14. **Madison.** James Madison, the fourth President of the United States, from 1809 to 1817.
15. **esprit de corps.** Morale; literally translated from the French, spirit of the company.
16. **Naval Archives.** Records of the Navy Department.
17. **Bureau of Construction.** The branch of the Navy Department in charge of the building and repair of war vessels.
18. **Ross.** General Robert Ross who commanded the English troops which captured and burned Washington in 1814 during the War of 1812. He was killed in battle shortly afterward.
19. **Tuckers, Watsons.** The names of fictitious persons coupled with the names of real characters is one of the means by which the author produces the illusion of reality. There were naval officers named Tucker and Watson,—the names are common enough,—but their careers do not fit into the story. Dr. Hale stated that all the characters are imaginary except Aaron Burr.
20. **Crowninshields.** Benjamin W. Crowninshield, Secretary of the Navy during Madison's second term. His brother, Jacob, appointed to the same office, never served.
21. **non mi ricordo.** (Italian). I do not remember.
22. **Legion of the West.** The army on the western frontier. The enormous tract called Louisiana had recently been bought from France.
23. **Aaron Burr.** An able and ambitious but unscrupulous politician of the early years of the republic. As a young man he served in the American Revolution. In 1804 he killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel on the Pali-

sades opposite New York City. After that, he realized that he could never be elected to high office in this country. He, therefore, organized a conspiracy to capture Texas, and possibly Mexico and the southern United States, to form a new republic with New Orleans as the capitol and have himself elected president. Betrayed by his fellow conspirators, and arrested by General Wilkinson, he was tried for treason but acquitted.

24. **Fort Massac.** Formerly a fort in Louisiana, north of New Orleans.
25. **flat-boat.** A barge with square ends and a flat bottom built of rough heavy timbers. Flat-boats were the common craft on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers before the Civil War. On such a boat Abraham Lincoln as a young man took a cargo of freight to New Orleans.
26. **barrack.** Building in which soldiers live.
27. **garrison.** The troops stationed in a fort.
28. **Monongahela.** A brand of whiskey, named for the Monongahela River.
29. **sledge and high-low-jack.** Games of cards.
30. **Bourbon.** Whiskey made from Indian corn.
31. **euchre and poker.** Card games.
32. **district-attorneys.** Lawyers elected or appointed to act on behalf of the government in the prosecution of criminals.
33. **Weekly Arguses.** Country newspapers of that day were as a rule weeklies, and very often the smaller the town the more pretentious the name of the paper.
34. **canebrake.** A dense growth of reeds.
35. **cottonwood.** A tree related to the poplar, with seeds covered with white fibers resembling cotton.
36. **catastrophe.** The miscarriage of Burr's plot.
37. **Jefferson.** Thomas Jefferson was then ex-president of the United States. President Madison and afterwards, President Monroe, consulted him on all great public questions.

There is perhaps intentional confusion here and elsewhere of Jefferson with Madison to enhance the realistic effect.

38. **House of Virginia.** A facetious comparison with European dynasties. Virginia was called the Mother of Presidents because all our first presidents except Adams were Virginians.
39. **wheel.** An instrument of torture in medieval times.
40. **Clarences.** Those who had turned traitor to their sovereign as George, Duke of Clarence, had deserted his brother, Edward IV, the first English sovereign of the House of York.
41. **House of York.** The rival of the House of Lancaster in the Wars of the Roses. In the story the American House of York is the Federalist party to which Burr belonged. Its leader, Alexander Hamilton, a New Yorker, had been the political opponent of Thomas Jefferson, the founder of the Republican-Democratic party and a distinguished member of the House of Virginia.
42. **Richmond.** The trial of Aaron Burr for treason was held at Richmond, Virginia, in 1807.
43. **lesser fry.** Small fish; of no consequence.
44. **Puget's Sound.** An arm of the Pacific Ocean which projects into the coast of the State of Washington.
45. **Fort Adams.** On the Mississippi River at the southern boundary of the State of Mississippi.
46. **spectacles.** Shows.
47. **court-martials.** Military courts. The more correct plural is courts-martial.
48. **colonels and majors.** Officers in the army.
49. **His Exc.** His Excellency, the title by which the President of the United States is addressed; and which Burr would doubtless have adopted had his plot been successful.

50. **frenzy.** Violent rage approaching madness.
51. **cavalierly.** Disdainfully.
52. **Spanish plot.** The unsuccessful attempt, in 1806, of the Venezuelan General Francisco Miranda to liberate the countries of South America from Spanish rule. Such attempts at liberation found a host of adherents in the United States.
53. **Orleans plot.** The proposal of Middle Westerners to take New Orleans from Spain by force because that country withdrew from the United States the port privileges she had granted at the close of the American Revolution.
54. **plantation.** A large farm in the South on which before the Civil War large crops of tobacco, maize, cotton, and sugar-cane were cultivated by slave labor.
55. **Orleans.** New Orleans.
56. **Vera Cruz.** A gulf port in Mexico.
57. **tutor.** A private teacher or instructor.
58. **Texas.** Texas, now the largest state in the Union, was once a part of Mexico. In 1836, under the leadership of Sam Houston, it revolted and became an independent republic. It was admitted to the Union in 1845.
59. **sworn.** The oath of allegiance is taken by every officer of the United States.
60. **ark.** Flat-boat.
61. **Benedict Arnold.** The American general who during the Revolution became a traitor. His treason proved fruitless.
62. **King George.** See note 35, p. 274.
63. **marshal.** A federal officer whose duties are somewhat like those of a sheriff.
64. **adjourned without day.** In Latin *sine die*. Ended the session of the court without setting a day for another meeting.
65. **signature.** The sentence of a court martial is not put into effect until it has been counter-

- signed by the President of the United States as commander-in-chief of the Army and Navy.
66. **Secretary of the Navy.** The member of the president's cabinet who is at the head of the Navy Department.
67. **out of favor.** Not until our great sea victories during the War of 1812 had aroused national pride in the navy was that arm of the service regarded with favor by the public.
68. **Tingey or Shaw.** Thomas Tingey and John Shaw; captains in the American Navy during the Revolution. Neither could have been in command of the ship on which Nolan began his exile.
69. **second officer.** The second in rank below that of captain.
70. **mess.** Officers who eat together.
71. **sentinel.** A marine detailed to act as a guard.
72. **watch.** The time when it's a sailor's turn to be on deck ready for duty. Each watch lasts four hours.
73. **marines.** Soldiers serving on shipboard.
74. **Alexandria.** A seaport of Egypt situated in the delta at the mouth of the Nile. Named in honor of its founder Alexander the Great.
75. **Cairo.** The capitol of Egypt on the Nile River.
76. **The Pyramids.** See note 69, p. 235.
77. **other hemisphere.** The eastern hemisphere.
78. **Paraguay.** A small country in the interior of South America.
79. **Hesiod.** A celebrated Greek poet of the eighth century B. C.
80. **Napoleon.** Emperor of France, the greatest military genius of modern times. After his final defeat at Waterloo, in 1815, he was exiled to St. Helena where he died in 1821.
81. **Canning.** George Canning a celebrated orator and statesman helped to unite Europe against Napoleon.

82. **packet.** A swift sailing vessel which made regular trips carrying passengers and mail as well as freight.
83. **message.** The President of the United States sends an annual message to Congress.
84. **Cape of Good Hope.** The southern extremity of Africa.
85. **the civil thing.** When war vessels meet in a port, the commanders exchange formal visits.
86. **admiral.** The commander of a fleet.
87. **Lay of the Last Minstrel.** A narrative poem by Sir Walter Scott.
88. **Bermudas.** The Bermuda Islands, in the Atlantic Ocean about 600 miles from the coast of the United States, belong to England.
89. **Jove.** See note 46, p. 355.
90. **magic.** Superhuman power especially to raise spirits and perform other marvels. Scott is known as the Wizard of the North because of his literary skill.
91. **Border chivalry.** The knightly courtesy and romantic spirit of adventure which marked the warfare along the boundary between England and Scotland.
92. **canto.** A chief division of a poem.
93. **could not go on.** The rest of the passage, which Nolan did not read, is
The wretch, concentrated all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.
94. **Walter Scott.** The author of the borrowed volume. Celebrated Scotch poet and novelist. The author of *The Lady of the Lake*, as well as of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and of many prose works including *Ivanhoe* and the *Waverley Novels*.
95. **braggadocio.** Bold front; like the character in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*.
96. **Flechier.** A French pulpit orator in the reign

of Louis XIV, noted for the eloquence of his funeral sermons.

97. **made.** Arrived at.

98. **Windward Islands.** The Lesser Antilles which extend from Porto Rico to Trinidad.

99. **lay off and on.** Sailed back and forth.

100. **salt junk.** Tough corned beef.

101. **turtle soup.** Soup made from the flesh and fat of sea-turtles such as abound in the ocean waters adjacent to the West Indies is deemed a delicacy.

102. **rendezvous.** An appointed place of meeting.

103. **Mediterranean.** The Mediterranean Sea between Europe and Africa. "Up" is eastward away from its outlet, the Strait of Gibraltar.

104. **Bay of Naples.** On the west coast of Italy; famous for its lovely blue water and the scenic beauty of its rocky shores.

105. **so much room.** During the Civil War it was the fashion for women to wear hoopskirts.

106. **Intelligence.** News.

107. **Consul.** A government official who resides abroad to look after the affairs of his own country.

108. **bevy.** Flock.

109. **matrons.** See note 17, p. 232.

110. **Lady Hamilton.** Lady Emma Hamilton, widow of Sir William Hamilton, the British envoy to Naples which was then a separate country. She was more noted for beauty than for character, and was a conspicuous personage in European society.

111. **contretemps.** (French.) An embarrassing occurrence.

112. **contra-dances.** Dances in which the partners stand in opposite lines.

113. **black band.** Negro musicians.

114. **Virginia Reel, Money Musk, Old Thirteen.** Old fashioned, romping, contra-dances.

115. **cotillons.** Fashionable dances of the latter part of the last century.
116. **Vesuvius.** The volcano which overlooks Naples.
117. **Iron Mask.** The Man with the Iron Mask. A French prisoner of state, who died in the Bastille in 1703, always wore a black velvet mask. His identity remains a mystery.
118. **Junius.** The *nom de plume* of the unknown author of a series of political letters which appeared in a London newspaper between 1768 and 1772.
119. **libel.** Slander written and published. In this case a series of letters against Thomas Jefferson written by Alexander Hamilton and published anonymously in 1801.
120. **the War.** The War of 1812 between England and the United States.
121. **which ship.** See note 223, p. 411.
122. **frigate.** In the day of sailing ships, a war vessel, next smaller than a ship of the line.
123. **duels.** Fights between two opponents. The decisive battles of the War of 1812 were sea fights, such as those between the *Constitution* and the *Guerriere*, the *United States* and the *Macedonia*, the *Constitution* and the *Java*, the *Chesapeake* and the *Shannon*, etc. The American ships won thirteen of sixteen such battles fought during the war.
124. **ports.** Openings in the sides of a ship.
125. **cockpit.** An apartment below decks on a warship used by the surgeon as an operating room during a battle.
126. **struck.** Hauled down the flag; a sign of surrender.
127. **artillery.** The branch of the army which operates the cannon.
128. **commodore.** A naval officer next in rank above the captain of a ship.
129. **sword.** At sea, the defeated commander goes

- aboard the victorious ship and, in token of surrender, gives his sword to his conqueror.
130. **quarter deck.** The part of the deck between the stern and the mainmast. It is reserved for officers.
131. **despatches.** Report of the battle.
132. **Secretary of War.** A member of the president's cabinet.
133. **Porter.** Captain David Porter. During the War of 1812 he sailed round Cape Horn in his frigate the *Essex* and captured many British whalers in the South Pacific Ocean.
134. **Nukahiwa Islands.** The Marquesas in the South Pacific Ocean, of which Nukahiwa is the largest island. In November, 1813, Captain David Porter, upon his own authority, took possession of the island. The United States failed to assert a formal claim and the islands became a French protectorate.
135. **This Porter.** Admiral David Dixon Porter, the son of Captain David Porter. He was conspicuous in the Civil War for his service under Farragut in conquering the Mississippi River from New Orleans to Vicksburg.
136. **this Essex.** Admiral Porter was associated for a time with a ship named *Essex*.
137. **fortifications.** Military works for protection.
138. **embrasures.** Openings through which cannon are discharged.
139. **ravelin.** A detached, triangular part of a fortification.
140. **stockade.** A row of posts set close together in the earth as a barrier.
141. **that battery.** On the island. An army officer would naturally know more about the art of fortification ashore than any sailor.
142. **Gamble.** John Gamble, an officer of the *Essex*, whom Porter left in command of Nukahiwa.
143. **station.** The United States now has naval

- stations in the Pacific Ocean at Hawaii, Pago-pago, Guam, The Philippines, and elsewhere.
144. **preoccupied.** The literal meaning. (*pre* means before.)
145. **formal.** Casual, not intimate.
146. **note-books.** The making of note-books, scrap-books, common-place books, and the like is a habit worth cultivating.
147. **Natural Science.** The science of living things; it included zoology, botany, and other special sciences; now called the biological sciences.
148. **profession.** The occupation other than manual labor in which a person is chiefly engaged; the learned professions are theology, law, and medicine.
149. **diversion.** Anything which affords relaxation from work.
150. **centipedes and cockroaches.** Vermin which swarm on every ship but are seldom sought as specimens of science.
151. **the house fly and the mosquito.** Neither of these insects belongs to the orders named.
152. **Lepidoptera.** The order of insects to which moths and butterflies belong.
153. **Steptopotera.** Literally an order of insects with twisted wings; there is however no such order known.
154. **Linnaeus.** A famous Swedish botanist and naturalist.
155. **John Foy.** The idiot in the poem *The Idiot Boy* by William Wordsworth.
156. **aloft.** On sailing vessels the sailors clambered up the rigging and upon the yards. For Nolan, a landsman, that would be strenuous exercise.
157. **midshipman.** Formerly, a naval apprentice aboard a man-of-war who served the officers as messenger. At present a naval cadet becomes a midshipman upon graduation from Annapolis.

158. **Slave-Trade treaty.** In the Treaty of Ghent which ended the War of 1812 no mention was made of the right of search which led to the war, but Article IX of the Treaty provided for the abolition of the slave-trade.
159. **Reigning House.** See note 38, p. 398.
160. **Middle Passage.** The route across Atlantic between the ports of western Africa, whence slaves were shipped, and the West Indies.
161. **chaplain.** A clergyman who conducts religious services on shipboard or elsewhere.
162. **Mars.** The planet most resembling the Earth.
163. **Deuteronomy.** The fifth book of the Old Testament.
164. **as little reason.** Unquestioning obedience is demanded of soldiers.
- Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die.
- Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *The Charge of the Light Brigade*.
165. **schooner.** At the time of this story, when most ships were square-rigged, mariners looked down upon the schooner a two-master, rigged fore and aft. It has however become the prevailing type of sailing vessel.
166. **Portuguese.** The language of Portugal and her colonies. The slave trade of that period was mainly in the hands of Spaniards and Portuguese.
167. **chaos.** Confusion.
168. **hold.** The inside of a ship where cargo is placed.
169. **patois.** An illiterate dialect.
170. **Zulu click.** A click or cluck made with the tongue is used in the speech of the Zulus, Hottentots, and other South African negroes.
171. **Beledeljered.** Land of Dates in Arabic. A region of northern Africa between the Sahara

Desert and the Mediterranean Coast. The name is no longer used in geographies.

172. **hogshead.** A big barrel about twice the ordinary size.
173. **Choctaw.** One of the most intelligent of the American Indian tribes. They have moved from their former home in Mississippi and Alabama to Oklahoma. The word Choctaw like the word Greek in the phrase "All Greek" means something unintelligible.
174. **Kroomen.** The Kroo are a tribe of stalwart negroes in western Africa.
175. **Fernando Po.** An island in the Gulf of Guinea.
176. **"put that into Spanish."** Dr. Hale has given the following account of this quotation:
"The phrase is General Taylor's. When Santa Aña brought up his immense army at Buena Vista, he sent a flag of truce to invite Taylor to surrender. 'Tell him to go to hell,' said Old Rough and Ready. 'Bliss, put that into Spanish.' 'Perfect Bliss,' as this accomplished officer, too early lost, was called, interpreted liberally, replying to the flag, in exquisite Castilian, 'Say to General Santa Aña that, if he wants us, he must come and take us.' And this is the answer which has gone into history."

General Zachary Taylor was in command of the American army in northern Mexico during the Mexican War. In 1849 he became the twelfth president of the United States.

177. **deus ex machina.** A Latin phrase which means "god from the machine." In the theatres of ancient Greece and Rome, whenever the characters of a play were in difficulties from which there was no human escape, it was the custom, to bring upon the stage, by a mechanical contrivance, the image of a god who set everything right and brought about a happy ending.

178. **Cape Palmas.** A promontory on the west coast of Africa in Liberia.
179. **Rio Janeiro.** The chief city of Brazil noted for one of the safest and most beautiful harbors in the world.
180. **expedients.** Ways of procedure.
181. **voluble.** Fluent. A foreigner whom one does not understand always seems to speak with extraordinary rapidity.
182. **pickaninnies.** Negro children.
183. **barracoon.** Quarters for confining slaves before sale or shipment.
184. **elements were melting in the fervent heat.** A Scriptural expression, used twice in the New Testament; II Peter, chap. 3.
185. **Mountains of the Moon.** A range of mountains in Africa, said by Ptolemy, the celebrated geographer of the second century, to contain the source of the Nile river. For a long time it was believed that they did not exist, but they are now identified with Mt. Kilimanjaro.
186. **Great White Desert.** The Sahara in northern Africa, the largest desert in the world.
187. **rub his nose with theirs.** A savage method of greeting and of expressing respect.
188. **stern-sheets.** The space in the stern of an open boat where the steersman sits.
190. **St. Thomas.** A small island in the West Indies which at the time of the story belonged to Denmark. It is now a possession of the United States.
191. **ben trovato.** (Italian.) Literally *well found*. From the Italian proverb, If it is not true, it is cleverly invented.
192. **So poor Philip Nolan, etc.** In a revised edition printed nearly fifty years after the end of the Civil War, Dr. Hale omitted this paragraph, because, to use his own words, "I believed it true when I wrote,—and I believed it necessary. But we all rejoice when such

men are as glad that they have a country as are those who opposed them in a war."

193. **Bragg and Beauregard.** Braxton Bragg and Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard American generals, graduates of West Point and veterans of the Mexican War, who at the outbreak of the Civil War, were compelled by conscience to resign from the Federal army. Like General Robert E. Lee, they went over to the South and distinguished themselves in the Confederate army.
194. **two years ago.** The story was written two years after the Civil War.
195. **Maury and Barron.** Matthew Fontaine Maury and Samuel Barron. Distinguished naval officers of the United States who resigned at the beginning of the Civil War and joined the Confederate Navy.
196. **broken up into little shreds.** Separated into single states.
197. **Boulognes.** Resorts of political exiles like Boulogne-sur-mer a seaport of France on the English Channel.
198. **Leicester Squares.** Neighborhoods such as Leicester Square in the West End of London. It is a middle class residential section frequented by foreigners.
199. **upbraid.** Blame.
200. **execrate.** Curse.
201. **Lieutenant Truxton.** William Talbot Truxton afterward commander.
202. **South American station.** The ocean waters are plotted into areas called stations to each of which a naval fleet is assigned.
203. **La Plata.** Rio de la Plata, an estuary about 150 miles long between Uruguay and Argentina.
204. **Buenos Ayres.** The capital of Argentina and one of the principal ports of South America.
205. **his adventurous cousin.** "He is called a brother in one place, and a cousin in another,

because such slips would take place in a real narrative.”—footnote by Dr. Hale.

206. **Mexicans got their independence.** Mexico deposed the last Spanish viceroy in 1821.
207. **Austin.** Stephen Fuller Austin, the founder of Texas. Austin, the capital of the state, is named in his honor.
208. **Honduras.** A republic of Central America.
209. **Tamaulipas.** A state in Mexico which borders upon the United States and the Gulf of Mexico.
210. **California.** California was part of Mexico until it was ceded to the United States in 1848.
211. **Captain Back's.** Sir George Back, an English arctic explorer.
212. **Sir Thomas Roe's Welcome.** A strait leading into Hudson Bay; named in honor of Sir Thomas Roe, a famous English envoy of the first half of the seventeenth century.
213. **Vallandingham's.** Critics of the United States like Clement Laird Vallandingham, a fanatical politician of Ohio. During the Civil War he was so outspoken against Lincoln and the Union that he was courtmartialled and sentenced to prison. Lincoln wisely preferred to make him a laughing stock instead of a martyr so he commuted his sentence and sent him to the Confederates. The South however did not want him either so he made his way to Canada. He finally came back to the United States where he practised law. In 1871 he accidentally shot himself while handling a revolver during a murder trial.
214. **Tatnalls.** Those who like Josia Tattnall left the service of the Union for the Confederacy. He became commander of the famous iron-clad Merrimac and ordered her destruction rather than permit her capture by the North.

Dr. Hale might well have omitted this passage also from his revised edition.

- 215. **triced.** A sailor's word meaning tied.
- 216. **thirty four.** The American flag has a star for every state.
- 217. **separate sovereignty.** States Rights; disunion.
- 218. **expiated.** Atoned for.
- 219. **Ohio.** Ohio became a state in 1803.
- 220. **brought off a good deal.** Including information unintentionally given.
- 221. **Chesapeake.** An American frigate. In 1807 the British frigate *Leopard* tried to search the *Chesapeake* for deserters from English ships. The Americans were unprepared to fight and after a vain attempt to escape, surrendered after firing only one shot. The right to search American ships which England asserted led to the War of 1812.
- 222. **Barron.** Commodore James Barron. He was suspended from the navy for five years for his surrender of the *Chesapeake*.
- 223. **Java.** The British frigate captured during the War of 1812 by the *Constitution*. In the earlier part of the tale, supposed to have been written before the receipt of Danforth's letter the narrator wrote "which ship it was on I cannot tell." See page ** line **.
- 224. **Fulton.** Robert Fulton's steamboat the *Clermont* made her successful trip up the Hudson on August 11, 1807.
- 225. **Scott.** General Winfield Scott was in command of the victorious army in the Mexican War.
- 226. **Jackson.** General Andrew Jackson, the seventh president of the United States from 1829 to 1837. He defeated the British at New Orleans after the treaty of peace which ended the War of 1812 had been signed.
- 227. **Grant.** General Ulysses S. Grant. The greatest general on the Union side in the Civil War. From 1869 to 1877 he was President of the United States.

228. **Vicksburg.** A port on the east bank of the Mississippi river. It was of the utmost strategic importance during the Civil War, and its capture by Grant on July 4, 1863 combined with the Union victory at Gettysburg on the same day proved to be the turning point of the war. It was at Vicksburg that Grant used his famous phrase "unconditional surrender."
229. **West Point.** The site of the Military Academy of the United States on the West bank of the Hudson river. It was established in 1779 by Washington, Hamilton and Knox, and reorganized in 1817.
230. **Naval School.** The Naval Academy of the United States at Annapolis, Maryland, was established in 1846 by George Bancroft, the eminent historian then secretary of the navy.
231. **Robinson Crusoe.** See note 62, p. 111.
232. **Old Abe.** Abraham Lincoln.
233. **General Benjamin Lincoln.** An American general during the Revolution.
234. **first families.** Aristocrats whose social standing depended upon their ancestry. The abbreviation F. F. V. stands for First Families of Virginia.
235. **Oregon Congressman.** Benjamin F. Harding a politician of Oregon when the state was admitted to the Union in 1859.
236. **Smithsonian Institute.** An institution of research, exploration and learning founded at Washington through the bequest of an English scientist, James Smithson. At the present time the Institute houses in its museum scientific collections of untold value.
237. **Exploring Expedition.** The expedition organized in 1853 by General John C. Fremont, "The Pathfinder," to finish the exploration of a route across the Rocky Mountains to California.
238. **Capitol.** After its destruction by the British

in 1814 the Capitol was completed in 1830. It has since been enlarged to more than twice the original size.

239. **pediment.** The triangular space over the portico of a Greek temple. The Capitol is built in the Grecian style of architecture.
240. **Crawford's Liberty.** The bronze statue of Liberty Armed, over 19 feet high surmounts the dome of the Capitol. It is the work of Thomas Crawford, an American sculptor.
241. **Greenough's Washington.** A colossal statue of George Washington by the American sculptor Horatio Greenough stood in front of the Capitol.
242. **Rebellion.** The Civil War which began with the attack upon Fort Sumter, April 12, 1861.
243. **Presbyterian, Episcopal.** Religious sects or denominations of the Protestant faith.
244. **collect.** A short prayer for a special purpose.
245. **Order of Cincinnati.** The Society of the Cincinnati is an association formed by the officers of the Continental army, at the quarters of Baron Steuben, the German patriot who served as Washington's aid. The name was taken in honor of Cincinnatus, a noble Roman who was called from his plow to rule the republic during a war, and who went back to his farm when the war was won. Washington was the first president of the society. The society is maintained by the descendants of those originally eligible as members.
246. **"They desire a country, etc."** Hebrews XI, 16.
247. **Set up a stone.** Of this ending, Dr. Hale has remarked, "No one has erected this monument."

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS

I.

Rewrite the following sentences selecting the word or words in italics that make a correct statement.

Do Not Mark the Book

1. Edward Everett Hale was a *northerner*; *southerner*; *westerner*; *Canadian*.
2. The Man Without a Country is a *true story*; *founded on fact*; *adapted from another writer*; *true to life*.
3. It is a *patriotic*; *sad*; *humorous*; *tragic* tale.
4. Philip Nolan was *intelligent*; *mised*; *weak-minded*; *wicked*.
5. He became a man without a country when *he secretly conspired with Aaron Burr*; *he cursed the United States*; *sentence was pronounced upon him*; *the sentence was approved by the President*.
6. Nolan made *several*; *many*; *no*; *few* friends.
7. His exile *reformed*; *brutalized*; *demoralized*; *weakened* him.
8. His punishment was *too severe*; *fitted to the crime*; *well-deserved*; *inadequate*; *unjust*; *inhuman*.
9. He is supposed to have died on *the Atlantic Ocean*; *the Pacific Ocean*; *the Indian Ocean*; *Lake Superior*.
10. The moral of the story is *never lose your temper*; *It is all right to be disloyal if you do not speak your mind*; *Right or wrong, my country! if wrong to set it right*; *if right to keep it so*; *Be a patriotic American*.

II.

Complete the following statements.

Do Not Mark the Book

A.

1. Edward Everett Hale was — — — — —.
2. There is — — — — — in this story.
3. Frederic Ingham — — — — Philip Nolan personally.
4. Nolan was born in the — — — — — century.
5. Nolan was a — — — — —.
6. He was a good — — — — —.
7. He was — — — — — linguist.
8. Nolan — — — — — physical exercise — — — — —.
9. During his years of exile he — — — — —.
10. He was — — — — — years old when he died.

B.

1. Philip Nolan never spent more than — — — — — on the same ship.
2. Nolan — — — — — English books.
3. He — — — — — read the Bible.
4. His favorite occupation was — — — — —.
5. Nolan knew nothing of — — — — —.
6. The — — — — — Amendment was added to the constitution before Nolan's death.
7. Nolan's character — — — — —.
8. He — — — — — tried to get — — — — —.

9. He learned all about — — — — —
— before his death.
10. Nolan was buried at ————.

III.

1. Prepare a topical analysis of the story.
2. Select the passage you like best and learn it by heart.
3. Outline the progress of the United States from the time sentence was passed upon Nolan until he died, under the following captions: (a) Territory added; (b) States admitted; (c) Presidents elected; (d) Wars fought; (e) Inventions; (f) Great American authors.
4. On an outline map of the world locate the places mentioned in the story.
5. RESOLVED, That Philip Nolan should have been pardoned.

Prepare a debate on this subject.

List the arguments on both sides of the question.



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